The WORD of AUTHORITY

J. F. Carson

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By
J. F. Carson, D.D., LL.D.

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TO MY WIFE
WHOSE FAITH AND LOVE OF
THE CHRIST
ARE INSPIRED BY THE
SAYINGS OF JESUS

Gift of Rev. Dr. B. Jennings

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Foreword	ix
I.	Concerning Christ's Teaching	1
II.	Concerning God	20
III.	Concerning the Son	35
IV.	Concerning the Holy Spirit	46
V.	Concerning the Paraclete	57
VI.	Concerning Forgiveness	67
VII.	Concerning Prayer	77
VIII.	Concerning Joy	91
IX.	Concerning Consecration	105
X.	Concerning Mastership	120
XI.	Concerning Achievement	129
XII.	Concerning Caution	141
XIII.	Concerning Childhood	159
XIV.	Concerning the "Little Ones"	171
XV.	Concerning Hearing	180
XVI.	Concerning Commonalty	192
XVII.	Concerning the Needs of Man	201
XVIII.	Concerning Trouble	213
XIX.	Concerning Heaven	224

FOREWORD

THE Word of Authority is the word of Christ. "Never man spake like this man." He said of himself, "I am . . . the truth." Nicodemus said to him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." "The people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority."

Christ's words throb with vital assurances. To this day they nerve the world with incessant affirmations. They grip the moral faculty. Strength and fiber and integrity are always present. Their worth — their literary, intellectual, spiritual worth — is incomparable. "The rainbow threads of their simple, stainless beauty shine through the prisms of the years with a glory that enthralls."

Christ spoke to the universal soul. He spoke on the essentials, not the incidentals; on the eternals, not the ephemerals. He dealt with principles, not precepts: with truth, not facts. He always spoke on exalted themes, on high ideals, but ever in a practical way. The Being and sovereignty and love of God; the relation of man to the Infinity; the sinfulness of sin and the Father's willingness to forgive sin; the possibilities of a life in Christ and

the beauty of holiness — themes in which are found the inspiration of

"The mighty hopes that make us men."

This book makes no attempt to present the teaching of Christ in any systematic or complete form. It is not a treatise, but a meditation. No claim for originality is made. There is in the book little that is new and much that is borrowed. Sometimes only the thread that binds the parts together is mine.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to my friend, Ford C. Ottman, D.D., who read the manuscript. For his kindly criticisms and valuable suggestions I am profoundly grateful.

J. F. CARSON

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THE WORD OF AUTHORITY

The Word of Authority

I

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING

WHAT Jesus said about his own utterances challenges attention. Had any teacher other than he said such things about his own teaching his utterances would have been instantly repudiated; and the teacher, however great his fame, would have been discredited. But Christ's utterances are accepted, and no one would think of them as conveying any hint of egotism, or as having in them any intimation of presumption. They evoke neither resistance nor recoil, but on the contrary appeal to us on the ground of their fitness and truthfulness. They seem of right to belong to him, of whom his enemies said, "Never man spake like this man."

One of these utterances, chosen because it is perhaps the strongest, as it is certainly the essence of the other utterances, is a saying recorded by three of the evangelists. It is this: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." "Heaven and earth" — the sure, stable creation of

God, the scheme of things in the universe and their ordained order — "shall pass away, but my words" — "words," the most fugitive and fleeting of things known to us, that seem to perish with the vibrations of the air — "my words shall not pass away." It is the incoherent utterance of a brain disordered, or it is the confident note of deity.

Nineteen hundred years have passed since Christ said these words. The utterances of the sages of his time are forgotten, or at most are read by a few scholars; but the words of Jesus are now read and studied and cherished by more people than ever before. It has been said that in religious, Bible-reading Scotland, Paine's "Age of Reason" had its widest circulation and its greatest popularity. There may be no ground for denying the statement as to the "circulation," but there are abundant reasons for doubting the statement as to "popularity." The Scotch are and always have been a reading folk. If Scotland may boast of the fact that many of the world's great writers are her sons, she may also take pride in the fact that her great writing sons have had a vast number of great reading brothers. Of course the "Age of Reason" would have a large circulation in Scotland, for her people read much; but they were and are a religious folk, and there is grave doubt of the popularity of such a book, not only because it was not true to the religious thought of Scotland, but because its reasonings and its arguments were not on the plane

of the sturdy thinking of the Scots. But, granting the circulation or the popularity, you will not find in the homes of Scotland to-day many copies of Paine's book. On the other hand, the people now living in those Scottish homes are as familiar with the words of Jesus as have been the people of Scotland in any age. The age of reason comes and goes. School after school of thought and criticism rises and falls, but to the humblest disciple and to the wisest sage the words of Jesus abide as the very wisdom of God.

"My words shall not pass away." Two thousand years attest the truth of that utterance. If his words have held their place through two thousand years, many of them being years of skepticism, doubt and criticism, it is probable that they will hold their place till he comes; and in the new order his words will be supreme — the law of the kingdom. The fact that his words have not passed away leads us to ask why it is that they have remained? What is the secret of their permanency?

The answer that slips easily and first from our pen is that they live because they are the words of God: and Christ, the Son of God, is in them and back of them. The claim that Jesus made for his words implies that they are of God. Could any other teacher, with any conceivable motive save to deceive, or with any reasonable hope to be believed, say, "My words shall not pass away"?

The persistence of his words through the cen-

turies, abiding in the hearts of men for comfort and for guidance; inspiring the genius of men in art and in literature; controlling the conduct of men in commerce, in industries, and in the professions; giving direction to the trend of civilization, marks them out as the words of God. How else can we account for their endurance? The words of others are after a few centuries forgotten, while the words of Jesus are read and believed by an ever-increasing multitude. The continuance of the teaching witnesses to its divine source and authority.

The words of Christ have transformed humanity, and have created a new civilization. Christ's teaching on childhood has built the schools and colleges of the modern world, has enacted the laws for the protection of childhood, and has erected the beneficent institutions for dependent children. As I approached a great orphanage, the home of a thousand parentless children, over the doorway I read: "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Christ built that and all other orphanages. So with other eleemosynary institutions of modern civilization: they find their inspiration in the teaching of him who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The results produced by his words attest that they are from God.

The place that these words hold in the solemn and sacred hours of one's life shows that they are from God. When men are in health and are enjoy-

ing success, they may admire the majestic pages of Plato, the rhythmic beauty of Ruskin, the golden verses of Tennyson; but in the hour of suffering or of disappointment, or in the hour when death approaches, prince and pauper, scholar and schoolboy, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, alike will say, "Read to us the words of Jesus; they comfort us and they alone are the language of eternity." In the supreme moments of life men are not concerned with literary form and finish, with philosophical speculations, with scientific discoveries, with theological postulates, or with psychological hypotheses: they are rather concerned with spiritual realities and eternal verities. Christ is supreme in the realm of the intellect, yet his words, while rich in wisdom, belong not to the literature of philosophy, nor of criticism, nor of theology even. They belong to the literature of the spiritual. They are of the spirit and of the heart. They reach to the very deeps of our being. They are the warm spring sunshine, winning back to life and to love and to holiness many spirits held frost-bound in the ice grip of worldliness and sin. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The power of Christ's words to save, to inspire, and to comfort, is the witness that they are the words of God.

They are the words of God because the Son of God is in them and is back of them. Jesus based what he said upon what he was in himself. With himself he associated the principles that he taught,

and he made acceptance of himself to be the way of entrance into life and truth. No other world teacher has done that. Imagine Plato saying to the people of Athens, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"! Fancy Socrates saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink"! Think of Seneca saying, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness"!

Jesus said all these and in saying them showed that with his words he identified himself. The most distinctive thing in Christ's teaching is the way in which he so persistently and energetically presents himself. As Carnegie Simpson says — and everyone should read his book, "The Fact of Christ" — "All other great teachers are profoundly conscious that they are but pointing to a realm of truth, and — all the more if they are truly great teachers — they efface themselves before its eternal principles. Alone, absolutely alone, among leaders of the soul, Jesus absorbs the highest principles in his own personality." This is another reason why his "words shall not pass away." They are life, his life; and because he lives, his words also live.

The question, What is the secret of the permanency of Christ's sayings? may in this way be answered: They contain truths taught nowhere else, except in writings whose authors borrowed their ideas from him. Some deny originality to Jesus and say that everything he taught had been

said by others. In order to establish their position they ransack the Old Testament, the ancient writings of rabbis, the sacred books of the Orientals, and other literature of antiquity. The result of their research is pitifully meager. They fail to show that Jesus is a "plagarist," or "an echo," or a shrewd "eclectic who gathered together the gems of many minds and times and dazzled the world by the treasures which he had borrowed."

Jesus often quoted the Law and the Prophets, the writings of the rabbis, and he may have quoted other writings; but in every instance he enlarged and enriched the quotation.

Jesus proclaimed truths that neither Hebrew poet nor prophet, neither Jewish rabbi nor Indian teacher, had ever conceived. He struck out fearlessly into realms of truth of whose existence the poets and prophets and sages of the race had never dreamed. Who said about God the things that Jesus said? Men had thought of God as a God of vengeance, to be feared; a God of power, to be dreaded; a God of majesty, to be adored. Jesus smote all such notions of God, as the "sun smites the snowdrifts into running brooks for the pastures." He revealed God as man's Father; as one that loved, and that sought to be loved; as a Friend, full of kindness and sympathy; as a Saviour that, with wistful longing, followed the sinner to the full recovery of his life. Where will you find such a doctrine of man as Jesus taught — a doctrine that

set on man a value beyond that of the whole world, putting upon human life such an emphasis as to exalt man above all other creation? What other teaching magnified man as man? Who gave mankind such a program for right living? Read the Sermon on the Mount. With it no other law of life is comparable. Where can you find such a view of the future as Jesus gives? The immortals — as we call them — wrote about immortality, but their best writings are little more than musings. "Jesus . . . brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." So Jesus illumined every other truth that man holds to be vital. His words shall not pass away because their content is not found in any other utterance prior to his own; and is found now in such utterances only as have been derived from him.

What is the secret of the permanency of Christ's words? One element of that secret is the fact that the thought conveyed by his words is broad in its conception and universal in its application. Christ teaches along broad lines. He does not deal with unimportant facts or with fleeting feelings. His words probe to the root of life and conduct, they pierce to central issues, "to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," and are "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." They are principles, not precepts. They are fundamental laws, not incidental rules. They dethrone secondary things from the primary places which these secondary things too often hold in men's thoughts.

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING

The ideas of Jesus are broad enough to cover all the centuries, and comprehensive enough to meet the situations that develop among all nations. Many of the theories of world teachers are local, and many disappear with the lapse of time, but after nineteen hundred years the ideas of Jesus abide and the words by which his ideas are expressed are destined to outlive the stars. The people of the twentieth century listen to him as did the throngs that crowded about him on the mountain side, on the seashore, or in the synagogue, and are as interested in the doctrine he taught as were the Jews and the Gentiles of two thousand years ago. His ideas are as broad as the demands of the mind and are equal to the needs of the heart of each succeeding generation.

The common people, as of old, hear him gladly. The sons of genius are students of his words. Masters of literature adorn their pages with quotations of his utterances. Musicians, whose tones touch the heart and make it sing, find their theme in his life and in his words. Artists, whose genius has made them immortal, find in Christ and in his utterances the subject as well as the inspiration of their greatest works. Philosophers that live beyond their own generations borrow their central ideas from his teaching. His words delight the inner eye with the vision beautiful, and with radiant images crowd the sanctuary of the imagination. Dickens pronounced the parable of the Prodigal Son the

most beautiful story in literature. Coleridge said that the richest passage in literature is the Beatitudes. Burke said the most important political document on the rights of man is the Sermon on the Mount. Professor Jenks, foremost among the social and political economists of the day, said to me one morning at Stony Brook, as we walked and talked about the new social order, that "the social program of to-day is being formed in the light and on the lines of the Sermon on the Mount." The master teachers of this and of other ages bow in reverence and obligation to the Teacher of Galilee.

The permanency of Christ's words does not depend upon their breadth of meaning or upon their beauty of expression or upon their universal applicability. His words shall not pass away because they satisfy the human need in all times and in all places. His words are direct and definite. They sound the deeps of human thought and action. He spoke on the exalted themes, such as the majesty of the divine Being, the spirituality of life, the relation between God and man, the reëstablishment of a lost relationship, the certainty and the glory of the future life. But not in the abstract or as a philosopher did Christ discuss these great themes. He elaborated them in their vital relationship to life. We must not think of the sublime as being separated from the practical. "If we divorce," says Dr. Jowett, "the practical from the sublime, the practical will become the superficial, and will degenerate into a

very lean and forceless thing." One reason why some people do not give more place to religion in their lives is because they think of it as pertaining to the other world rather than to this, as being concerned with the ideal and possible rather than with the real and the actual. But the reverse is true. A learner of Christ will quickly discern that religion has to do with the life that now is, and with its most real conditions, its most practical affairs. But he will discern also that Jesus united the ideal and the real, the possible and the actual. His teaching leads to the creation of a wealthy content in common life, and to a worthy purpose in practical affairs.

Another secret of the permanency of the words of Jesus is the simplicity of their expression, with no loss to the character and depth of their teaching. True simplicity is the first-born child of a deep and accurate knowledge. A cynic has said that "the literary style of Gibbon was a style in which it was impossible to tell the truth." The very opposite may be said about the style of Jesus: it was a style in which it was impossible to tell a falsehood. It was never vague, never mystifying. An Oxford professor has been cited as saying that Longfellow had a hundred readers in England where Browning had one. As a reason for the statement the professor said that "the American poet seems like a single pasture-grown oak; while the English author was a tangled forest, where the very richness of the

vines hid all the trees." There was no such tangling or confusing in the utterances of Jesus.

Michelangelo defined perfection as "the purgation of superfluities." If that is the standard of perfection in speech, then Christ's speech is perfect. What Ford Ottman, in his book, "Imperialism and Christ," says of the Bible as a whole, may be even more emphatically said of the words of Jesus: they are "as clear as a sunbeam, as concise as a mathematical proposition, positive in statement, plain in meaning, precise in application." Christ never indulged in the intricate subtleties of logic nor in the artificial flights of rhetoric. He spoke in terms of such simplicity that men could not miss his meaning, with such directness that men were compelled to understand, with such pictorial power that men could not fail to see.

He spoke with such clearness that there could be no misunderstanding of the obligation implied in his words, no evasion of the duty which they enjoined. The positiveness of his words gives them permanency. Everywhere and always men know where Jesus stands and what he means. He permits no compromise. He does not bend. He is not a reed shaken with the wind. Every sentence he speaks conveys a definite and positive conception, a principle to which men must give heed and allegiance, or else suffer loss. Certain conceptions, certain truths, certain principles were accepted by Jesus as true; others were rejected as erroneous,

and with all the resources of his mind, and with unflinching boldness, Jesus proclaimed the true and denounced the false. To him certain standards of living were uplifting, others degrading; and, with all the vehemence of his being, he upheld the one and repudiated the other. He had clear-cut opinions, and he expressed them with unmistakable emphasis. As Jefferson says, "If to be dogmatic is to be positive, then Christ was the most dogmatic teacher who ever brought men to his feet." His words sound out positive verities. They are a message, not an inquiry. Others argue, he announces. Others debate, he declares. Others reason, he reveals.

If you would sift the wheat from the chaff, the true from the false, the right from the wrong, study the words of Jesus. If you aim rightly, if you intend strongly, if you mean to construct a life rather than to make a living, if you want to be a man of honor and honesty, of vigor and virtue, of integrity and intelligence, of character and charity, you will read and of necessity obey the words of Christ. In the words of Christ you will find the secret of character-building, and it is character that counts in the world. J. Pierpont Morgan once said: "There are men with the best securities to whom I would not lend a dollar. But," added he, "I have loaned a million dollars to a man who had not a single security but his own character." Character has a cash value. Build a character on

the lines of the teaching of Jesus and it will be reliable, radiant, resonant.

The difference between the permanent and the transient is determined by what you put first and central in your philosophy or religion. Jesus puts love at the center of truth and life and he is the only teacher that so does. No wonder that men marveled at his teaching! "Love your enemies," he said, and men stood aghast, showing that they believed that God only could be expected to manifest a love so great. In putting love at the center of all things Jesus revealed his incomparable wisdom. Love is the abiding virtue; it is the permanent force. Love "never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Love's vision is pure, clear, deep. Love alone knows God and without knowing God no man can know anything worth knowing. Love links the little and the great with God and adjusts all things in accordance with their relative importance. In putting love first Jesus made it forever impossible that his words should pass away.

One other secret of the permanency of the words of Christ is their spiritual content. They throb with the spiritual. What were the themes on which most frequently he spoke? God, the Holy Spirit, prayer, faith, love, hope, heaven. These are the themes that touch upon vital realities in the life of

man, that deal with the unseen forces, that inspire and energize the common life. We are not clear enough in our thinking about spiritual things. We are not bold enough in our grasp upon them. We are timid and hesitant about them. We do not associate the mighty energy of God with them. We must learn of Jesus. We must heed his teaching.

He teaches about God, in whom these spiritual forces abide. He says — and his is the authoritative word — that God is the potent presence in the life of man, and that without a consciousness of that abiding presence, man's life is emptiness and nothingness at the core. He teaches about the Holy Spirit, by whom the force abiding in God is administered. He says that the Holy Spirit is not an influence, but a divine personality winning men to God, instructing them and impelling them to holy living and to heroic doing. If you would live better, know more, and do greater things than you have ever attempted, let the Holy Spirit dwell in your lives more fully. He teaches about prayer, the Spirit in action. He shows us that prayer is more than a devout aspiration. It is a compelling force. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Pray more. If it be not habitual with you to pray, then let prayer become a habit, and let the habit be maintained until praying becomes a delight. He teaches about faith, the wing of prayer. He shows us that faith is more than an attitude: it is creator of a mighty endeavor. Faith is winged spirit: it

is intellect at its best. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and you will learn what faith can accomplish. Have more faith and you will achieve more. He teaches about love, the atmosphere in which faith lives. He says that love is more than a sentiment. It is an energy productive of abundant labor, and it should make all labor light. Keep love alive and bright, and you will be able to labor more and with less fatigue. The Scotch lass was carrying her baby brother along the road. An old Scotchman meeting her said, "My lass, that boy is too big and too heavy for you to carry." "O sir," she replied, "he's nae so heavy, he's my ain brither." Love lightens the load. He teaches about hope, the outcome of faith and love. He shows us that hope is more than a posture. It is an outlook, generative of most enduring patience. He teaches about heaven, the ultimate realization of all hope. He shows us that heaven is not a fancy nor a far-away hope. Heaven is a fact and a near-by reality. Some of your most cherished ones, and some of mine, are there. They think of us and love us, as we think of and love them.

"My words shall not pass away." They have too much of God and of the Holy Spirit and of prayer and of faith and of love and of hope and of heaven in them ever to pass away.

These are a few of the many things that Jesus talked about. If we would read his words more faithfully we would enter more fully into the pos-

session of our inheritance. If we would have a more close companionship with God; if we would have the full indwelling of the Holy Spirit; if we desire prayer to become a deeper reality, faith to be a stronger power, love to be a mightier force, hope to be a clearer vision, and heaven to be a more positive reality; if we really desire these, then we must read, study, obey, the words of Jesus — the words that "shall not pass away."

II

CONCERNING GOD

THE cardinal doctrine, the doctrine of all doctrines, is the doctrine of God. Some of us may not be able even to apprehend that doctrine, and none of us can fully comprehend it. We may write "insoluble" upon it and so dismiss it from thought. We may ask the old question, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" and answer it with the old prophet of Israel, "There is no searching of his understanding." And yet this is the search appointed to man, the search that he cannot surrender if he would, and that he should not surrender if he could. It is of vital concern to everyone to know God; for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

It is of first importance that we should obtain and hold to right views about God: for all our theories of life evolve from our conception of God. Tell me what is your conception of God, and I will define your doctrine of man, of life, of sin; your scheme of philosophy, and your system of theology. The Master of Balliol, Dr. Jowett, was approached

by a woman who thought that his religious views were too liberal and too vague. She said, "Sir, can you tell us what you really think about God?" He answered, "Madam, it matters very little what I think about God, but it matters a great deal what God thinks about me." But in that very statement the old master told what he thought about God. God is One who thought of him. It matters very much what we think God thinks of us. It is of vital importance that we should have right views of that divine nature that is every hour appealing to our natures, the one reality of our life without which we can neither think, nor speak, nor act.

Our life is strong or weak according to the measure in which we cherish the idea of God. Man is strong only when all the faculties of the mind, and all the affections of the heart, and all the purposes of the will, are drawn in orderly obedience and in eager loyalty around some supreme reality that suffuses them all with its glow, and welds them all into unity of character.

Robert Browning records his own experience when he makes one of his principal characters say:

> "I have always had one lodestar; now
> As I look back, I see that I have halted
> Or hastened as I looked toward that star —
> A need, a trust, a yearning after God."

This yearning after God is the deepest emotion of the human soul. "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!"

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." And God has not ignored this longing of the soul. In ways many he has made himself known. He reveals himself in his works. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork." He reveals himself in his Word. The Bible is not only a revelation from God: it is also a revelation of God. He reveals himself in Jesus Christ, who is "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance." (R.V.) In our consciousness and thought of him he interprets himself. He dwells with the man that is of a humble and contrite spirit. "If a man love me," said Jesus, ". . . my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." These are the four mediums of manifestation — Revelation, Creation, Incarnation, Inspiration; the Bible, the universe, the Christ, the soul within.

One of these four mediums of manifestation is before us in this chapter — the manifestation of God through Jesus Christ. To know Christ is to know God. The more perfect our apprehension of Christ, the more complete will be our knowledge of God. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

That declaration is made, not only in the person of Christ but also in the teaching of Christ. In

studying what Christ said about God we do not find any definite utterance concerning the fact of the existence of God, or any distinct disclosure of the nature of God. The nearest approach to such a disclosure is found in Christ's conversation with the woman of Samaria, and then he used only one phrase, "God is Spirit." And Christ said that not for the purpose of teaching anything about the nature of God, but for the purpose of directing man's thought in the matter of the worship of God.

But the utterance is of vital importance. It is the largest and roomiest thing that is said about God in the Scriptures. It opens to us a vast treasure in the knowledge of God. The statement announces the essential Being of God, rather than reveals his character. "God is Spirit," not a spirit. The article is wanting in a literal translation. "God is Spirit." He has no material organism, no bodily parts. Matter does not cleave to him; it is the product of his creative energy. "God is Spirit," self-originating and self-sufficient, having no limitations and without restriction. "God is Spirit," "infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." "God is Spirit," immanent in the universe and transcendent in his immanence. "God is Spirit," and spirit is not visible to physical eyesight. That does not imply that he is not real. Most of earth's mighty forces are unseen. No one ever saw gravitation, but its power holds the worlds in their places. No one ever

saw electricity, and no one is able to tell us exactly what it is. But this energy lights our houses and runs our errands and is the medium of our transportation. No one ever saw love, but love is the mighty force and majestic factor in human life. "When we say we cannot see God, we are simply saying what science is continually saying of the most common and the most potent realities with which scientific men have to do." "God is Spirit," never within sight, but ever and everywhere present, dwelling and reigning in every corner of the pathless universe, the intimately near as well as the infinitely far.

> "His dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
> A motion and a spirit that impel
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

The first thing to be learned from Christ concerning God is the reality of his existence. Christ assumed that, and on that fact all his relations with men were based. His constant references to God show that he assumed the existence of God. He would not entertain the thought that the existence of God could be a matter of doubt. He made no attempt to prove the existence of God, and why should he undertake to prove a fact that rests, as an intuition, at the basis of the universal heart? The idea of God is native to man.

The second thing to be learned from Christ con-

cerning God is that the nature of the divine Being is beyond the comprehension of man. "The infinite and the eternal cannot be reduced to a logical diagram." We cannot break through our constitutional limits. We cannot grasp the stars; our arms are too short. We cannot comprehend God; our minds are too limited. Jesus recognizes this constitutional limitation and so gives no definition of God and no description of the Eternal, as he gives no proof of his existence. And all because of the human limitation. Professor Calderwood, of Edinburgh, truly said, "The divine existence is a truth so plain that it needs no proof, as it is a truth so high that it admits of none." Long ago Plotinus said, "To attempt to grasp the Infinite by reason is futile." Although it is admitted that the infinite God is incomprehensible, and that our knowledge of him is both partial and imperfect; that there is much in God that we do not know at all, and that what we do know we know very imperfectly, yet we have a knowledge of God, and, as far as it goes, it is accurate knowledge.

The third thing to be learned from Christ concerning God is that the great, unsearchable God may be revealed to man. Man cannot by searching find out God, but God can and does disclose himself to man. God has ever sought to make himself known to man. This is the meaning of the many dispensations that mark God's dealings with man. Each of these dispensations contains some distinct revelation

of the divine Being, each revelation being fuller and clearer than that which preceded it and out from which it grew. Some one has called attention to the fact that in each of these dispensations is found a characteristic name for God, a name that reveals a distinct attribute of the divine character. In the patriarchal age the name for God is the Almighty; in the covenant dispensation it is Jehovah; in the monarchy, it is the Lord of Hosts; in the prophetic era, it is the Holy One, and in the Judaism that preceded the advent of Christ, it is Our Lord.

Thus the revelation moved from the primal idea of absolute power, the Almighty, to the idea of pure, loving sovereign authority, Our Lord. Each step in the revelation was prophetic of that which followed it, and so, mingling with the first disclosures of the divine Being, were rays of light, dim foregleams of something better, something more. While the revelation gradually became full-orbed, there was never a time when some rays did not burst through the darkness to brighten and bless mankind. This revelation grew in fullness and clearness until the world received its supreme and final manifestation of God in Jesus Christ.

This is the meaning of the word in Heb. 1: 1–3, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, . . . who being the brightness of his glory," — the effulgence of his glory — "and the express image of

his person" — the very image of his substance. In our humanity, the most exquisite, the most sensitive, the most perfect thing that he made, God has written the message that tells man what he is. So full and so complete is the manifestation of God in his Son that Christ said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And so Christ gives a new name for the new dispensation. To the five names, the Almighty, Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One, Our Lord, Jesus adds the name that exhausts the meaning, that is the crown and climax of all the other names — Father.

This revelation is not made in the way of direct disclosure, but incidentally. The names that Jesus employed contain revelations of God. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan calls attention to the fact that in all the Gospels there appear but three names or titles that Jesus used in speaking of God. These three are God, Lord, Father.

The name God. This name, in all tongues, represents God as the absolute Being, in the sense of being self-existent, necessary, independent, immutable, eternal. The name represents God as the infinite Being, "not in the sense of including all being, all power, all knowledge in himself to the exclusion of all other intelligent agents; but in the sense that no limit can be assigned to his being or perfection." The name God contemplates the infinitude and almightiness of the divine Being.

The name Lord. Jesus used this name only when

he quoted from the Old Testament Scriptures. The name reveals God as Governor, Ruler, Master. It conveys the general idea of authority and dominion. It shows that God is the active, working, controlling presence in the life of man, the supporter and the ruler of all that exists. This is an advance in the disclosure of the nature of the divine Being. It shows that the God who made all things is over all, directing and controlling them. Creation without providence is a freak of cruelty. Makership uncrowned by governorship is a mere frenzy of power.

The name Father. God, Lord — these names place God in the distance. The Infinite and the Eternal are beyond us. The glory of the Infinite blinds us. The majesty of the Eternal dazes us. The full blaze of the essential deity is too bright for mortal eyes. It is as if we turned our eyes upon the sun, only to find that, though himself "the very source and fount of day," his brightness passes into darkness, and makes us fain to be content with reflections of his glory. But Christ uses a third name that brings within our comprehension and appreciation the idea of God. He calls God, "Father." That was the name Christ almost constantly used for God. In his last discourses Jesus uses the name God only four times, while he uses the name Father at least forty times. It was not a new name. The prophets had used it, and so had the psalmists. But Jesus touched it with his own peculiar power and

it became a new name. He lit it with the light that he had seen when he moved in heaven before the Father's face, and it shone with a glory it has ever since borne.

As the name itself was not absolutely new, neither was the idea. The fatherhood of God was a fact before Christ declared it. Now and then through all the dispensations the idea of the fatherhood of God was grasped by some saint or seer of the race; and some men, like Abraham, homed themselves in the consciousness of the fact of his fatherhood. But only a few caught the vision until Jesus revealed it to all and made it the hope of humanity. There is a suggestive word in Matt. 11: 27, 28: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father"; — there are depths in the being of Jesus that cannot be fathomed by human thought or experience. Who art thou, then, O man, that sitteth in judgment on Jesus, and pronounceth upon him, and labeleth him! None but the Father knoweth him. "Neither," continues the Word, "knoweth any man the Father, save the Son." But Jesus does not stop there. He adds "and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How? By making the Father known unto you.

The soul of man is forever restless till it rests in God as Father. I am sad, or sorrowful, or sinful; and the God to whom I go must be — well, what?

I will tell you. A child lay sick upon her cot, tortured with pain, and whispered to the big man bending over her, "Father, give me your hand." And holding her father's hand, though quivering with pain, she never moaned. I do not know what others may do, but in my bewilderment and heartache and sorrow and struggle, I cannot rest in ideas, visions, aspiration. I look up and say, "Father," and I am calm, confident, content. With that name upon my lips light shines through my darkness, hope, like a rainbow, spans my darkest sorrow, peace steals into my soul like a strain of music that has wandered from heaven; my soul rests in God. My God is not a cold abstraction; a dull, silent, mighty force; a sublime name around which are gathered many inspiring ideas — my God is a living, feeling, loving Father.

"A marvel seems the universe,
A miracle our life and death,
A mystery which I cannot pierce,
Around, above, beneath.

"And now my spirit sighs for home,
And longs for light whereby to see,
And like a weary child has come,
O Father, unto thee."

This is Christ's revelation of God. By living the Son's life of intimate communion, of loving obedience, of satisfying affection, he revealed God as Father.

The intimation that Jesus gave of his own relations with God contains revelations of God. Jesus

said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Moses, David, Isaiah, nor any of the men of majesty, would have ventured to say that. Jesus justifies his amazing statement by referring to the mutual relationship between the Father and himself. "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." The inherence is mutual and unlimited, so that what Jesus is, God is; when Jesus speaks, God speaks; when Jesus acts, God acts; when Jesus suffers, God suffers. This is the revelation contained in Christ's relation with God: God is a conscious Being, not an impersonal force, not "a wise and beneficent energy," not "the final purpose of the universe," not "a power that makes for righteousness," not a beautiful dream, nor a sublime idea; not an abstract thought, but a living, conscious Personality. The moral qualities are the same in God as they are in Jesus. As Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled," so God is holy. As Jesus had compassion on men and forgave their sins, not shrinking from the Magdalene's touch nor turning away from the cry of the dying thief, so there is forgiveness with God. As Jesus wept, so God sympathizes with human need and suffering. The love and tenderness, the holiness and forgiving grace, as well as the severity and power, seen in Jesus are manifestations of what God is. God revealed by Jesus is not a Being outside the universe, above its struggle, and taking no part in its processes — self-determined, exalted, the great onlooker:

"Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish or a sparrow fall."

No! He is interested in the universe and in all that it contains. He is one that loves, that yearns, that suffers, that enters into the storm and conflict and ultimately makes "all things work together for good" to them that love him. It is a marvelous, bewildering revelation, but it is the revelation of God in Christ. This idea of God has entered the consciousness of humanity. It has been the inspiration of saint, apostle, prophet and martyr since Christ revealed the fact that God is One that can understand, that can suffer, that can sympathize, that has felt the extremity of human anguish, the agony of human bereavement, the deeps of human sin, and has moved to redeem and restore and bless. God cannot be God and turn unmoved from the tragic heartbreak of his children's cry. It is essential to his very nature that he come forth and bend the hand of service to our need.

The fourth thing to be learned from Christ concerning God is that in God man finds perfect satisfaction of soul. Philip said to Christ, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." That would settle all doubts, all difficulties, all unrest. So Philip thought, and so have thought the children of men in all the ages. Philip's statement voices the thought of the universal heart. Christ admitted the reasonableness of Philip's request, and at the same time showed the way, the only way, in which the request

could be granted. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Paul saw the Father in "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Seeing the Father thus revealed in the Son, men find rest and satisfaction to their souls. Hugh Price Hughes and Edward Smith were Wesleyan ministers. They were as divergent in temperament as two men could be. On many problems of theology they differed and were often friendly antagonists. Their ministries paralleled each other and they died about the same time. When their wills were opened it was found that each had written his own epitaph. Hugh Price Hughes left instructions that they should put on his tombstone this inscription:

"THOU, O CHRIST, ART ALL I WANT."

Edward Smith instructed that this testimony should be carved on his tombstone:

EDWARD SMITH

WHO WAS SATISFIED IN JESUS.

All that Jesus said concerning God finds its full exposition and illustration in himself. He is the revelation of God. Dr. Henry van Dyke, in "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt," summarizes this revelation. The personality of God was distinct and luminous, not only by the recognition of an eternal fatherhood in his nature, but by the light of the knowledge of his glory shining in the face of a person. The righteousness of God was disclosed in a new aspect by the thought that he had sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin to con-

demn sin in the flesh. The goodness of God was confirmed and made sufficient for all possible human needs by the conviction that he who spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all, would also with him freely give all things. The saving will and power of God were apprehended through the vision of him in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The everlasting and inseparable love of God became the sure ground of hope only when it was seen embodied in Christ Jesus our Lord. The true meaning of filial obedience to God and of union with God was interpreted in the light of conformity to the image of his Son. And the immense significance of immortality was comprehended in the possession of a life hid with Christ in God.

Evermore Jesus is man's comprehension of God. He is Immanuel, God with us. He makes God known. He brings God near to us.

"Through the dimness of the temple
Slowly dawned a mystic light;
There the Master stood in glory,
Manifest to mortal sight.

"Hearken, good and faithful servant,
True disciple, loyal friend!
Thou hast followed me and found me;
I will keep thee to the end.

"Nevermore thou needest seek me;
I am with thee everywhere;
Raise the stone and thou shalt find me;
Cleave the wood and I am there."

III

CONCERNING THE SON

FOR two thousand years the unique Personality of the Son of God has been the center of the world's profoundest inquiry, has been the inspiration of its most holy living, and the impulse back of its most heroic services. On the subject of his person and his work innumerable are the books that have been written. From them we turn, in our meditation on his Person, to his revelation of himself.

In all the memorable utterances of Jesus there are none comparable in imperial authority with the words that he spoke concerning himself. The people of his day were earnestly eager to know all about him; whence he came, and who he was. The Baptist, imprisoned for his faithfulness, and under the shadow of a passing doubt, sent to him, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Of him Pilate asked, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" The high priest said, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." His Person was the problem of friends and of foes. All

realized that he was different from other men, that he was more than other men, but these could not define or account for his Personality. They saw behind the fine porcelain of his humanity a brilliant flame that charmed, but confused them.

Jesus gave no categorical answer to such questions. He gave no explanation of himself, no systematic analysis of his nature. Yet he uttered words that disclosed his own clear and unchanging consciousness of what and whence he was. He expressed himself in terms that revealed his full understanding of his solitary loneliness, his incomparable greatness. In the faith of his disciples, and in his own deep consciousness, he filled a place that no other could fill. The word of authority concerning the Son is expressed in many utterances in which there may be no mention of his name. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." "Many will say to me in that day." "Come unto me, all ye that labor." "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." In these and in similar utterances, Jesus presents himself to us in solitary and transcendent greatness. Not by inferences from such utterances, however, but from distinct and definite statements do we get the word of authority concerning the Son.

Christ, while upon earth, lived in the full consciousness of his relation to heaven. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came

down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Dr. W. J. Erdman says: "From this verse we may say in our poor human language, — He had double consciousness. He was in heaven while he was on earth because he knew he was one with God while he was clothed with our humanity." This twofold consciousness is revelatory. Christ was God, and he was man — a divine-human personality. We cannot regard him as divine only; nor can we view him as human only. In Jesus there is the blending of conscious Godhead with conscious manhood. The strands are inseparable, and refuse to be parted. The crown upon his human brow, the scepter in his human hands, these are the crown and the scepter which through everlasting ages are his conscious possession.

Christ had a perfect conception of his Messianic mission. He came to Israel as their Prophet, their Priest and their King. From all other prophets he differed in that he was himself the truth — "I am . . . the truth." "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness."

From all other priests he differed in that he offered no sacrifice for himself, but was himself the sacrificial offering — "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." From all other kings he differed, in that other kings put people under tribute to themselves, but Jesus put himself under tribute to the world.

Toward the close of his life he pressed the fact of his Messianic claims upon the people and appealed to them for their allegiance. The light shone in the darkness only: and the darkness comprehended it not. There were a few rare exceptions. These beheld his glory, these owned him as their King. But the mass of the people failed to recognize him. He declared himself to be the Son of God, the King of Israel: for the one claim he was condemned by the Jews; for the other he was crucified by the Romans. Caiaphas condemned him because he claimed to be the Son of God; Pilate rejected him because he claimed and proved himself to be the King of Israel. Whatever the attitude and actions of men might be toward him, he lived and moved among them always in the serene and perfect consciousness of his Messiahship, under the constraining passion of the full realization of the meaning and purpose of his mission to the world. His two definite conceptions of his mission were Revelation and Redemption. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." That is Revelation: Jesus Christ reveals God to man.

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This is Redemption: he came to save men. Himself without sin,

he came to save the sinful. This is the secret of his enduring influence. Not Christ's teaching, so matchless; not his miracles, so marvelous; not even his character, so exalted and beautiful: these cannot explain the hold of Jesus upon human life. His hold, admitted in the deepest consciousness of men, is the hold of the God of redemption. All over the world the hearts of men and of women are turning to him because they know that he is able to deliver them from their sin and to save them to the uttermost. In the declaration of his purpose to save the world lies Christ's consciousness of his non-participation in the world's condition in sin. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"

Christ had a full realization of his power to meet the needs of man. "I am the good shepherd." "I am the light of the world." "I am the bread of life." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Think how the consciousness of such inexhaustible power, of such boundless love, wrought into the conception of his life work, would give to Christ the self-revelation of his wondrous mission!

Christ had an abiding realization of his deity. "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." The reference is to his procession from God and to the commission that he received from God; a procession from God as a part of God's own essence. He proceeded forth in his essence and in his personality from God,

as of the very being of God. And he was commissioned by God. This is emphasized again in the words, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." What a wonderful consciousness that! A Galilean peasant, a young rabbi, uttering such a word! We cannot think of mere man expressing such sentiments. Neither could the disciples, and they owned his deity when they said: "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." Over thirty times in the Gospel records Jesus claims to have been sent forth from God. Of all these utterances the substance is that Jesus was eternally with, and one with, the Father.

"Before Abraham was, I am." There is a difference greater than appears in the two verbs "was" and "am." Jesus makes use of two verbs. "Abraham," he says, "was born" but "I am." This difference is indicated in the rendering of the American Revision. Nor is this all. "I Am" was the name of God. There was but one "I Am" known to the men to whom Jesus spoke. The utterance was a clear claim of equality, if not identity, with Jehovah. On hearing him thus exalt himself the Jews took up stones to stone him. They understood the full measure of the claim: it implied his eternal existence, his right and title to the name Jehovah. He

made no attempt to correct their understanding. He admitted the exactness of their reasoning. What he claimed to be he was. He also claimed identity with the Father. "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "That ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." There are at least eight passages in John's Gospel wherein Christ asserts his identity with the Father. We cannot explain, we may only believe and adore. The mystery we cannot penetrate; but let us remember that mystery is not necessarily something beyond the bounds of reason. We believe in the fact of life: the fact we cannot explain. We believe in the existence and in the freedom of the will: the depth we cannot explore. We believe that God is in Christ: the mystery we cannot unfold. All the great truths that men live by reach into the unseen. The full meaning of the incarnation has never been expounded: it never will be; and in that it is like other vital and dominant facts of the universe. They transcend all human intelligence. They are accepted, even though they are mysteries, because they are facts based on evidence that it would be unreasonable to refuse to believe. The test of a belief is not our comprehension of it, but what is wrought through it. The acceptance of the deity of Jesus is not a logical conclusion to which we are forced by any particular process of reasoning; it is a conclusion to which we are driven by the knowledge and experience

of what Jesus has done and is doing. I could not, if I would, bring myself to believe that the world-conquering religion of Christ had its origin in the enthusiasm of a young Jewish rabbi. The entire experience of my life makes it impossible for me to believe that Jesus was a man only; a teacher simply; yet the exponent of the most exalted type of morality. What Jesus does justifies and confirms his claim of deity. So Carnegie Simpson treats the subject. So also does Christ. When the Baptist sent messengers to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Jesus said to them, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard." The very things that John wanted to see done were being done. It is the appeal to fact. Jesus lives and touches all life with vital power. In his grace the stains of sin are washed out, the life of the spirit is recovered, conduct is transfigured; men stand forth clothed with purity, their souls lifted into the likeness of his holiness. We believe that Jesus is God because he does the works of God, because our life feels the thrill of his life, "because we have heard vocal with his praise voices which once sounded in orgies of shame," because a redeemed humanity is rising in response to the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The work of Christ in disclosing God leads to the belief that he is the Son of God. What the Christian receives from Jesus is not simply teaching about

God, but it is a life and a power that are of God himself. We find in Christ all that we may expect to find in God. We find God not beyond Christ but in him. We find in Christ the presence and power of what declares itself to be not less than God himself. When Jesus deals with us, and when he works within us, he does what God only can do. In the realization of this the Christian accepts Christ's statement, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me."

A mystery? Yes, but all truths, in proportion to their greatness, are mysteries; we accept them because we see what they do, not because we understand their nature or their working. Jesus always leads us to God. When we bow in reverence before God we always think of Jesus. Who shall explain it? The more we think of it, the clearer is the conviction, "In him was the brightness of the Father's glory." Mystery is the appropriate garment of divinity. As Saint Sixtus and Santa Barbara in Raphael's picture, so we adore and are silent before the ineffable glory.

There is an utterance of Jesus that may be taken as his supreme claim to Deity, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." At the Pool of Bethesda Jesus had healed an impotent man. The man told the Jews that it was Jesus that had healed him, and the Jews persecuted Jesus because he did such things on the Sabbath. Jesus justified his act, saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

In this utterance he put himself on an equality with God and claimed authority equal with the authority of God. The Jews perceived this, and they sought to kill him, because he "called God his own Father, making himself equal with God." (R.V.) The Jews would never have killed a Jew for claiming God as his Father, but Jesus claimed God as his own Father, claimed equality with God, and that provoked the fierce anger and rage of the Jews. From these words there is no appeal: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." It is the clear assertion of equality with the Father.

The same claim is made in the words: "I and my Father are one." This is the climacteric word of Jesus in the assertion of his own consciousness of his deity. We must either deny that Christ said this, or else we should worship him. The outstanding fact is that Christ makes the most amazing claims concerning himself. He declares that he came from heaven, that from all eternity he is consciously in existence, and he affirms his equality with the Father. These claims must be sound, or — let Browning say it:

> "If Christ, as thou affirmest, be of man,
> Mere man — the first and best, but nothing more;
> Account him for reward of what he was,
> Now and forever wretchedest of all."

No middle ground is there. Christ either is God, or — but there is no alternative. When I contemplate the facts of his marvelous life, his

sacrificial death on the cross, his far-reaching and abiding influence, my exultant soul breaks through every hindering quibble, falls at his nail-pierced feet, and in the glad recognition of his glory cries out, "My Lord and my God."

IV

CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT

IN the varied teachings of Jesus there is no strict application of the laws of reasoning or the rules of writing: no studied efforts to be either systematic or scientific, elaborate or logical. In his utterances there is nothing of the hard bondage of Aristotle's dialectics, the analytic exactness of Calvin's syllogisms, the compelling force of Butler's logic. Christ's teaching is simple, informal, conversational, rather than rhetorical. "His system is the natural meandering of the river, not the artificial course of the canal. But to the student of nature there is more method in a cedar of Lebanon than in the temple of Solomon." There is, nevertheless, in Christ's utterances a system as perfect as it is profound. In their aggregate there is a complete presentation of any and every subject that claimed his attention.

His teaching about the Holy Spirit is authoritative and final. It declares the essential deity, the equality of the Spirit with the Father and with the Son. We cannot penetrate the mystery of the Trinity, but upon this mystery we may meditate.

Of the mystery Dr. Boardman says: "The Father is the fullness of the Godhead in invisibility, without form, whom no creature hath seen. The Son is the fullness of the Godhead embodied, that his creatures may see, know and love him. The Spirit is the fullness of the Godhead in active working, in creation, in providence, in revelation, in salvation." The Father is God in universal relations, the Son is God in revelation, the Spirit is God in operation. "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory."

Christ assumes without argument the fact of the personality of the Holy Spirit. This is shown in many ways. Christ made equal with himself the Holy Spirit, in naming him "another Comforter." The Spirit he distinguishes from himself, but he recognizes the fact of equality in person and in rank. "Whom I will send unto you." It would be impossible for an impersonal influence or power to execute the functions declared by Christ to be those of the Spirit. There can be no comparison of a person with an influence, of a being with an attribute. "Baptizing them," as the Revised Version translates, "into the name of the Father," — personality; "and of the Son," — personality; "and of the Holy Spirit," — an influence? an atmosphere? No! You cannot thus unite in comparison personalities and influences. As God is a Person; as the Son is a Person: so also is the Holy Spirit a Person.

In his teaching concerning the Holy Spirit Christ declares that with all disciples there is maintained by the Spirit a threefold relationship. The first is a relation to their individual life. Of the Christian life the Holy Spirit is the Author. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Regeneration is the work wholly and alone of the Holy Spirit. Regeneration is not an amendment of the old life, it is no reformation, no transformation of the old life; it is the impartation of the life of God to men, so that they become "partakers of the divine nature." As the Son of God, in order that he might enter into the full fellowship of man, became by incarnation a partaker of human nature: so man, in order that he may enter into the full fellowship of God, becomes by regeneration a partaker of the divine nature.

Christ teaches that the Spirit develops the life by him created. "From within him shall flow rivers of living water. . . . This spake he of the Spirit." (R.V.) In the full development of the Christian life there is to be perfect satisfaction.

Christ teaches that the Holy Spirit guides the believer into the truth. While here on earth Jesus was the authoritative teacher of his disciples. They came to him with their every perplexity and problem. Before he left them he said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father

will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." By his infallible guidance we are led intothe knowledge of all truth. This is very important. Among the works of the flesh, enumerated by the apostle Paul, are heresies — self-chosen opinions, the result of the working of self-will. Following the leadership of the Spirit of truth we are led out of the impenetrable fog of unbelief into the radiant sunlight of faith. No more shall there be doubt of the inspiration of the Bible, no more a question of the atoning work of Christ, of his present intercession, of his crown rights: for of all these the Spirit bears convincing witness.

The second relation of the Holy Spirit is that which through the disciples he sustains to the world. To the world the Spirit is not sent: "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." But through those called out of the world — the disciples, the regenerated, the sanctified, the taught by the Spirit — the Spirit sustains a relationship to the world. Through the called and the regenerated he works to "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Most definite is the teaching of Christ concerning the Spirit's work in its threefold conviction. "Of sin" — yet a special sin: not sin in general, as that

arising from the violation of any of the Commandments. Conscience convicts and condemns the man that violates the holy law of God. It is not of any of these that the Spirit of God convicts a man; it is of the sin of unbelief, the sin of not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. "Of sin, because they believe not on me." The three great arraignments of sin in the New Testament are negative: not doing, Matt. 25:41–46; not loving, I Cor. 16:22; not believing, John 16:9.

"Of righteousness" — yet a special righteousness: not any righteousness of our own, not righteousness that results from anything that we are or from anything that we have done. Too well aware are we of our attainments and services. Of these we have no need of the Spirit to inform us. It is, says Jesus, a conviction "of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." It is the righteousness of Christ, not his personal righteousness, but the righteousness of his mediatorial service — the righteousness that he accomplishes in behalf of them that believe on him. That righteousness was perfected at Calvary, and confirmed when he ascended to God's right hand. Of this neither the world nor the believer would have knowledge, save through the work of the Spirit, and therefore of it the Spirit is sent to testify. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, . . . he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the

beginning." Peter bore such witness, saying: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

The Holy Spirit and the disciples bear witness to the exaltation of Christ. A witness can testify only to that of which he has personal knowledge. The disciples may testify to the righteousness of Christ, to the holiness and the beauty of his life, to the wonders of his work, to the fact of his death, to the marvel of his resurrection and to his ascension. With that their testimony ends. But beyond that the Spirit witnesses. He was in heaven when Jesus appeared, and saw him when he took his seat at God's right hand; he was a witness to the acceptance of his sacrificial work: and he came down from heaven to convince men of the vicarious and saving righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to offer that righteousness to all mankind.

"Of judgment" — yet a special judgment: not of "judgment to come." To add the words "to come" destroys the meaning of Christ's word. It is not a future judgment, but an already passed judgment that Jesus has in mind. "Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." There has been a great trial. Sentence is passed, though not yet executed on the prince of the world. Calvary is the final judgment of sin for every believer.

All "in Christ" are freed from sin's guilt and its penalty; they "shall not come into judgment." Many go through life in fear and trembling because of the Great White Throne before which they think they shall be summoned to stand. Before that Great White Throne the redeemed shall not stand. In Christ judgment has been passed upon sin, and his redeemed are free. For service there is to be a judgment, but not for sin: a judgment for reward, but not for retribution. The Holy Spirit has come to convict the world of that glorious fact.

Jesus teaches that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, unbelief; of righteousness, the deliverance from sin through the imputed righteousness of Christ; of judgment, the escape of the redeemed in the day of judgment.

The third relationship of the Holy Spirit to the disciples is that of power for service. Immediately before his ascension Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." This promise was fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. That outpouring inaugurated the dispensation of the Spirit that is to continue until the return of our Lord. As there is extending through the entire dispensation one body — the body of Christ, which is his Church: so also is there one baptism. Pentecost is not to be repeated. That baptism of the Spirit was once for all and forever.

The Holy Spirit came then to abide in the Church. Hence Pentecost is not a day: it is a dispensation: rather, it is a day and the beginning of a dispensation. The Holy Spirit came on a definite day, and he is to abide through this present age on that day inaugurated. Every believer that fulfills the condition may claim the privilege of that baptism, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The privileges and blessings that result from being filled with the Holy Spirit are enumerated. First, there is to be a clear conception of our relationship to God in Christ, "at that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." Ye shall know three things: "That I am in my Father" — hence we will not fear God. We may come to him with confidence, because Jesus is in him. "That ye are in me" — our standing in Christ. "That I am in you" — our confidence of the continued presence of Christ. "Ye in me, and I in you." What a wonderful interdwelling! The porous pole in the water, and the water in the pole; the iron in the fire, and the fire in the iron. The water in the pole because the pole is in the water; the fire in the iron because the iron is in the fire. Take the iron out of the fire and out of the iron the fire goes. "Ye in me, and I in you"; but ye in me, because I am in you.

Second, the illumination of the mind and the enlightenment of the heart. "In that day ye shall ask me nothing." You will not be in that day in any

doubt. The Spirit of God, who is the teacher of the believer, will illuminate your mind, so that you can discern all truth. Duty and doctrine shall be made clear when the infilling of the Spirit has come.

Third, a freedom and efficacy in prayer. "At that day ye shall ask in my name." And the promise is, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Here is a gracious sequence. The Holy Spirit assures us of our oneness with Christ, and in that assurance we ask in his name, in his nature; and that is our confidence that the Father hears us. When we ask in his name it is Christ that prefers the request, and "him the Father heareth always."

Fourth, there is a clear conception of our work as Christians. The Holy Spirit has come to testify of Christ, and the Spirit-filled believer will know that his one mission in this world is to bear witness of Jesus; not to make converts, not to save the world, but to bear witness of Christ. "But when the Comforter is come, . . . he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me." The mission of the Church is this: to bear witness of Christ, of his death, of his resurrection, of his ascension, of his intercession, of his coming again. A vast difference there is between the advocate and the witness. There is not too much advocacy, but there is imperative

need of more witnessing. This does not mean necessarily that the witnessing of everyone filled with the Holy Spirit shall lead multitudes to the Saviour. Peter, filled with the Spirit, witnessed to Christ, and on a single day three thousand were saved. Again he witnessed to Christ, and five thousand people confessed his name. But let us not forget that Stephen, equally filled with the Holy Spirit, witnessed to Christ, and he was stoned to death. Peter, filled with the Spirit, preaches, and three thousand are saved! Stephen, filled with the Spirit, preaches, and the witness is put to death! But Stephen's ministry, if we may make comparisons, was as effective a testimony as was Peter's; for, when Stephen witnessed, there was a young man there whose name was Saul, and Saul went forth; and, a little after, as though from Stephen's bleeding lips, he took the evangel of the Christ, and preached it to the far-away Gentiles. It is worth a good deal if by your witness you shall lead one to the Lord Jesus Christ; one that shall become an apostle of Christ to the world.

Fifth, there is given power to continue Christ's work on earth. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Christ declared the law of continuity of service — "that these men were to pick up the threads of the work that he had himself been doing, and were to weave them into the warp

and woof, until the whole perfect fabric should be completed." "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Jesus came from the Father, clothed in the power of the Holy Spirit, and he sent his disciples, in the power of that same Spirit, to do the same work — to reveal God to men, and to reconcile men to God.

"Blest Spirit! I would yield myself to thee,
Do for me more than I can ask or think:
Let me thy holy habitation be,
And daily deeper from thy fullness drink."

V

CONCERNING THE PARACLETE

THE distinctive teaching of Christ concerning the Holy Spirit is that given in the passover chamber. The words were spoken to the disciples only and were among the last that he uttered. They are of great tenderness and of vital importance. The central passage in his teaching is this: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." This is the statement of a fact vital to Christianity and to all genuine Christian experience — the fact of the coming of the Holy Spirit as an abiding presence in the believer.

Each sentence in the utterance will repay study. "I will pray the Father." The word translated "pray" is not the usual word so translated: it is not the word that is used to express the prayer of an ordinary suppliant. The word used is a word that is applied to the request that an equal makes of an equal: "I will pray"; that is, I will request

"the Father." The Son of God, who thought it not a thing to be grasped at to be on an equality with God, requests of the Father that he send the Holy Spirit.

Christ is very definite in his teaching as to the way in which the Spirit is to come. "Which proceedeth from the Father." "I will pray the Father, and he shall give." "I will send unto you from the Father." The procession is from the Father as a part of his own essence, and as his immediate Representative. The Father gives at the request of Christ, and Christ sends from the Father. The Father and the Son are alike interested in the mission of the Spirit.

"That he may abide with you for ever," or literally, "for the age." The fact of the age-ministry of the Holy Spirit is clearly taught. There never was a time when the Holy Spirit was not present and operative in the lives of men, just as there never was a time when the Son of God was not present in the world which he had made. Before the incarnation he was in the world. But the incarnation was his manifestation in the flesh, and was the beginning of a definite period of ministry that was bounded by his birth and his ascension. So of the Holy Spirit. He was in the world before Pentecost. But Pentecost was his manifestation in the Church, which is the body of Christ, and it was the beginning of a definite period of ministry that is bounded by Pentecost and the second coming of our Lord.

It is our privilege to realize the presence of the

Spirit, and not to think of him as distant from us. It was the sin of the Jews that they knew not "the day of their visitation." They were seeking a coming Messiah even while he was with them. It is a sin for Christians to think of the Holy Spirit as absent. He is with us and in us and will abide in the Church as a living, guiding, controlling presence until the return of the Lord. O for the finer hearing and the finer feeling that will realize his presence and respond to his leadership!

"Another Comforter." The word "Comforter" has a sweet and gracious sound; it rings like music in our souls. It suggests tenderness, sympathy, pity, love and a whole train of winsome associations. The Greek word translated "Comforter" is "Paraclete." The reason for the translation of the word "Paraclete" into the word "Comforter" is due to its primary meaning "to make strong," "to give courage," "to bring out the heroic qualities and the active virtues."

Thus the word that our fathers considered the best English equivalent of the Greek word "Paraclete" is a word in which sweetness and strength are combined. There is a sympathy that enervates and a sympathy that braces, a love that weakens and a love that inspires. It is the sympathy that braces and the love that inspires that are suggested in the rugged though gentle word, "Comforter."

With this understanding of the meaning of the word "Comforter" we get near the meaning of the

word "Paraclete." It has a deep significance. It means one called to the side of another as helper, defender, advocate. It means one that stands by the side of another in his hour of need, to afford sympathy and inspiration, or to render help to another in distress. A lawyer, pleading the case of a client; a physician ministering healing in pain; a brother supplying need.

I read of a lad that left home to make a way for himself in the world. As many before him, so had he wasted his substance, and the inevitable time of reckoning came. He sought assistance from friends and companions, but in a little while they all tired of helping him. In his last distress he determined to write home. Watch him! Read the note! "Dear Father," the pathetic appeal ran, "I am ill and undone. I have been foolish and sinful and have forgotten the spirit of your home. I want to get well, live right and be a man. But I cannot unless you help me. I deeply need your help, and I think you love me enough to forgive all, and to help me now. Will you come?" The next train found that father speeding on his way to his needy son, to put his strength, his character, his resources at the service of the son who was to be placed once more on the road to manhood. That father was a paraclete, a called one, a friend that soothes and strengthens and inspires. It was in this sense that the Greeks used the word "Paraclete," a word forever consecrated by the Lord in applying it to himself and to

the Holy Spirit. For he does apply the word to himself when he calls the Holy Spirit "another Paraclete."

That word "another" is most suggestive. It teaches us that the Holy Spirit is not given in exchange for Christ himself. The disciples wanted no exchange. All their hopes were centered in Jesus. He was their Paraclete, their Master and Friend. They did not want a substitute for him, and he did not offer to send them a substitute. His promise is of "another Paraclete." He himself will remain their Paraclete, but they shall have another. The Holy Spirit has not come to succeed Christ, as one may succeed another in any kind of work, but he has come to bring the living and unchanging Christ into the lives of men.

So there are two Comforters, Christ in the glory, and the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. The Holy Spirit, as "another Comforter," has come from the Father, at the request of the Son, to carry on the gracious work of grace and love, not in the absence, but in the presence, of the risen Lord.

We may not speculate about the great mystery of the union of the two divine Paracletes, the Son and the Spirit, in ministry to the sons of God. The two Comforters are inseparable in experience, and our devotion to the one is the evidence of the presence of the other. "No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

There are three ways in which Christ, as our Paraclete, serves the sons of men: first, as Saviour;

second, as Advocate, or Intercessor; and third, as Friend, or Companion. In the same ways does the Spirit serve us.

The Paraclete as Saviour. The great problem of life which, apart from Christ, must remain forever insolvable is the problem of sin, and of guilt as the consequence of sin. That problem baffles man and casts him down in despair until he sees Jesus as Saviour and Redeemer. If Christ had never come as the Deliverer from sin, men would be asking for him, or one such as he, to break the power of sin. Christ is to us not only our symbol for God, but he is our Saviour from sin, our Paraclete, coming to us, and in his sacrifice paying our debt and so setting us free from sin's guilt and penalty.

But sin is more than penalty. It is stain and enfeeblement. The Holy Spirit, as our Paraclete, enters the life, cleanses the stain, and imparts new power for spiritual living. Jesus, as our Paraclete, delivers us from the guilt and penalty of sin — from sin's past. The Holy Spirit as our Paraclete delivers us from the stain and weaknesses of sin — from sin's present. When the Holy Spirit enters the life the tendency to sin is met and mastered by a new tendency, the tendency to righteousness. The incoming of the Spirit means the outgoing of sin.

"And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are his alone."

Thus in our deliverance from sin the two Paracletes work together. Jesus, as our substitute, pays our penalty; and the Holy Spirit, abiding in our lives, frees us from the stain and power of sin.

Second, Christ is our Paraclete in that he is the Companion of our life. Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The Christian life is not modeled upon or inspired by an absent Christ, but by a present Christ. Jesus lives as Friend, Comforter, Paraclete. We have fellowship with him, and this is the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity. Christianity is not to be identified with a particular ethic, or doctrine, or polity, or society: the center of Christianity is personal relation with a personal Saviour. He is our Paraclete — we call him to our side when in need, and he always answers the summons. Christian experience on this point is continuous and constant. It is nearly eight hundred years since Bernard of Clairvaux wrote:

> Jesus, the very thought of thee
> With sweetness fills my breast.

But it was only the other day that our sweet Quaker poet wrote on the same theme:

> "The healing of his seamless dress
> Is by our beds of pain;
> We touch him in life's throng and press,
> And we are whole again."

Jesus is the ever-strong One, near at hand, present to heal and to help, our Saviour, Master,

Friend, Comforter, Paraclete. But it is possible to realize this companionship only through the Holy Spirit. When Jesus intimated that he was going to leave his disciples they were filled with sorrow. They thought that they were to lose his companionship. But he said to them, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

As clearly as words can declare it the truth is taught that we realize the companionship of Christ through the Holy Spirit. "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son," but in the communion of the Spirit. Nowhere in the Scriptures is fellowship with the Spirit mentioned. It is always communion. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion — not fellowship — of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." In the atmosphere of the Spirit we live in the sphere of Christ. The Holy Spirit reveals, undrapes the Son, makes real to us his presence. This dual Paraclete, the Son and the Spirit, is given to us for companionship.

Third, Christ is our Paraclete in that he is our Representative before the Father. This is intimated in the text, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." He carries into

the Father's presence his sense of our need and his purpose to relieve. When we are tempted, he is our Intercessor; when we have done wrong, he is our Advocate. "If any man sin, we have an advocate" — the Greek word is Paraclete — "with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." He is our Paraclete in the glory, representing us and pleading for us.

Christ is our Intercessor. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." And the Holy Spirit is our Intercessor. In the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, the apostle calls attention to the fact that the believer has two Intercessors. The Holy Spirit in the heart, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"; and Jesus Christ before the throne: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." As our Paraclete the Spirit dwells in the heart, giving meaning and effectiveness to our prayers. Thus the believer has two Intercessors, or two Paracletes interceding.

Christ as the believer's Paraclete represents him before the throne of God. The Holy Spirit takes the prayers we offer, interprets their petition, gives

them a deeper meaning, makes them his own, and so pleads for us.

In these ways the dual Paraclete is called to our side as our Helper, delivering us from sin, securing us companionship, guaranteeing us representation before God.

This is a fundamental fact, a basic truth. We need to cherish the fact and build upon the truth. The dual Paraclete is with us to give us victory over sin and doubt and sorrow and self, and to make us "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

VI

CONCERNING FORGIVENESS

ON the forgiveness of one of another Jesus speaks with authority. Some of his sayings on this subject were radical, sayings that astounded the people that first heard them; and they are sayings that the people of this age hesitate to accept, because the principles that Jesus stated contravene ordinary human thought and motives of actions. Jesus is our authoritative Teacher, and there can be no greater folly than to attempt to explain away his words, or to misconstrue their meaning. Let his sayings stand in all their ruggedness.

Concerning forgiveness, as between man and man, Jesus said: "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." This saying is very definite. First: The sin is one committed against another. Second: Such sin must be rebuked by the one offended. Third: Repentance conditions and commands for-

giveness. Fourth: The forgiveness is to be given without limit, when the repentance is continued.

But to understand Christ's teaching on forgiveness it is necessary to have before us many other of his sayings. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." This saying is found in the Sermon on the Mount. In another address on forgiveness, delivered at Capernaum, Jesus uttered these far-reaching words: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." After Christ had spoken these words Peter said to him, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" And Jesus answered, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." When the barren fig tree withered, Jesus said: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will

your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

Though so difficult of fulfillment, these utterances of Christ appeal to us as right, and we are constrained to believe that they express truths that cannot be gainsaid. They set before us, with great clearness and delicacy, an ideal that seems to be beyond our reach. At first we feel that there is something disheartening in so perfect a standard and something discouraging in the emphatic way in which Christ speaks. We must forgive, or the Father will not forgive us. There is no alternative. That is well: for the exacting words throw us back upon the grace of God, which alone can cleanse our hearts of all bitterness and lack of tenderness, and open in them a large forgiveness toward one another: even as God's heart is opened in largeness of forgiveness toward us. As God forgives us, so should we forgive one another. I shall not deal with the several passages that have been quoted in the order of their quotation, nor even in the line of their development of the grace of forgiveness. But having all the passages before us we shall glance at Christ's teaching on forgiveness.

1. The trespass or sin must, of course, be a real trespass or sin. Much needless misunderstanding and trouble comes from fancied grievances, offenses that exist only in the imagination, or that are magnified by thinking of and cherishing them. A sensitive disposition leads to imputing bad motives

where none exist, and to finding of sinister meanings in innocent acts. Such offenses are not referred to in our Lord's warning, for they are not worthy of consideration.

2. Trespasses that are mutual, when the fault is on both sides and both parties are equally guilty, do not come within the scope of these passages. In such cases, according to Jesus in other passages, the first thing to do is not to tell the other person his fault, but for one of the persons involved to acknowledge his own fault and so seek reconciliation. Such a course will almost inevitably lead the other person to confess his part in the matter, and so the reconciliation is effected at once.

3. When the trespass is real, when we have been actually wronged, or injured, or slandered, or betrayed, and when we are innocent, not having given any cause for the trespass, and the other party is wholly at fault, what are we to do? Something that the policy of the world laughs at, and that the practice of most Christians utterly ignores. The world's method of treating such a situation is to resent the action and wait an opportunity to get even. The way that the average Christian treats such a situation is to resent it, then treat it with indifference and haughtily ignore the offender. Both these methods are positively forbidden by Christ. If you are of the world and have no regard for Christ's teaching, you may follow the world's practice, but even then you will be hurt by so doing.

If you are a Christian you simply cannot treat the offender in that way without absolutely disobeying Christ.

4. Christ teaches that we are to have a concern for him who has done the wrong to us. The bigness of Jesus! He prayed for his enemies and forgave them. And the nearer we approach Christ in character and in conduct, the bigger we shall become. It pays in every way to do what he commands or expects us to do. It may mean that we shall have to humble ourselves. Then he will exalt us. It may mean that we shall have to sacrifice some pride, or if we prefer the term, some self-respect. Then he will crown us. It may mean that we shall have to do some unpleasant things. Then he will make the way pleasant before us. When we do what Jesus bids us do, no matter how the flesh may resist and revolt, we shall be enriched and ennobled, and the spirit will be made to rejoice.

Jesus tells us this: We must have concern for him who has trespassed against us. We must not let the sin lie on him without telling him about it, without telling him how he has wronged us, and has offended God. Such treatment might win the heart and save the life for God. We should not think first of how we have been wronged or injured or hurt. We should not think chiefly of our own dignity and rights. We should think of our Master's honor, our obedience to him, our opportunity to reclaim or to save or to beautify a human life. Such

conduct toward another blesses and enriches our own lives.

I was walking one day with a friend when a mutual acquaintance approached. He stopped and shook my hand, while my friend passed on. I called and said to him, "I want to introduce Mr. ——." At once Mr. ——stepped forward, put out his hand; but my friend deliberately turned his back and walked away. Mr. —— said not a word to me, but nodded and passed on. I approached my friend, and walked to the point where we were to separate. Not a word had been spoken about the incident. Then my friend said: "I suppose you think I did wrong. But that man grossly misrepresented me five years ago and I determined that I would never again speak to him." I said: "You are wrong, utterly wrong, everlastingly wrong. I do not know or care what the offense was, but you are wrong." And I quoted the word of Jesus: "'Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.'" "Oh," he replied, "Jesus was divine and could do that, but I am only human." "Then," said I, "you have no right to be an elder in the Presbyterian Church, nor a member of any church. If you are only human in the sense you refer to you have no place in the Church. The Church is for Christians. 'Ye must be born again.' 'I give unto them eternal life.' If you are not born from above and if you have not eternal life, the very life of God himself

in you, you are in a wrong place. But if you have the life of God, you must and will do as God does. I believe you are a Christian and I think you will be reconciled with Mr. ——," who also was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. Two or three days later I received a letter from my friend saying he had called on Mr. ——, had a fine time, all was cleared up. He added: "To-night I feel more like a Christian than I have felt since I confessed Christ when a lad of fourteen. I cannot tell you how much I am indebted to you for your counsel." It pays to do what Christ plainly tells us to do. He was no theorist, no fanatic; he was infinite in wisdom and told men the right thing to do.

5. Mark the process which Christ commends in this matter of forgiving the offender. First, "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone."

We should not wait for the man who has trespassed against us to make the advance. He should do it. He is guilty if he does not do it. But two wrongs never make a right. We should make the advance, if he does not. Let there be no spirit of irreconciliation between Christians. "Tell him his fault," put it plainly before him. It is hard to do, harder a good deal for some than for others. When one is aggrieved or wronged his sense of injury rises or falls according to the sensitiveness of his nature. There is neither virtue nor vice, honor nor shame in this. It is an instinct of our nature. But is a Christian to allow his natural instincts to rule him? What,

then, is the use of being a Christian? If we remain under the dominion of the flesh, what is the use of the spiritual? Friends, aye, Christian friends, may tell you that it is not natural to do such a thing as the literal words of Christ command. And they are right if the world is the standard of the natural. But it is natural if you are a Christian. Christ is the standard of what the Christian is and does. He tells you to be reconciled with him who has offended you. Go tell him of the offense and the wrong. But that is just the thing one does not like to do. Because of our sense of injury and hurt we shun the very person we should seek, and so the offense, which was once an act, becomes an attitude, and the one offended becomes guilty with the offender.

Jesus has stated two other elements in the process of forgiveness. If the offender will not confess his fault and become reconciled after you have seen him, then take two or three friends with you to convince him of his wrong, and through them effect a reconciliation. If he will not yield to that, then tell it to the Church, in order that he may be led to yield to its decision. What a tremendous force and influence and power Christians and the Church would have in the world if Christian people would do as Christ teaches in these matters of estrangement! The Church is weak and less powerful than it should be because Christian people do not live and do as Christ teaches. Put into real activity the teaching of Christ and the Church will win the world.

This is a high standard which I am setting up, but it is Christ's standard. It is a high profession we make when we declare ourselves Christians. We can make no higher claim for ourselves than that. As Christians we are to seek reconciliation with our brother. It is only when the offender, the man that has wronged us, has declined our personal overtures, the appeals of our friends and the decision of the Church, only then we are warranted in cutting off fellowship with him. Even then we must be charitable, and treat the implacable offender as a heathen and a publican.

If this teaching of Christ were obeyed what joy would sing in human hearts! What charity, firstborn of heaven and sweetest daughter of the skies, would control human lives! What peace would rule the world!

6. These utterances of Jesus teach that, whatever be the attitude of the offender, there must be forgiveness in the heart of the one offended. This alone makes possible the continuance of fellowship with God, this alone makes prayer acceptable to God. There is no use in praying if we live in willful, deliberate estrangement from a fellow being. God will not forgive the unforgiving. We cannot really believe in the forgiving love of God unless we find a shadow of it in our own hearts. Our forgiveness of others is an assurance of our Father's forgiveness of us. The forgiving spirit is divine. It is the Godlike spirit. "Take heed to yourselves: If

thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." How often must we forgive? Without limit. Christ said, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." At another time he said: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Forgiveness is not a thing that can be measured or timed. It is not a mechanical, mathematical thing. It is a thing of the spirit. The forgiveness must be perfect.

This is most practical. Many people practice it. And somehow one knows the people that do. The ideals we cherish, the feelings we indulge, the spirit that rules us somehow register themselves in our countenance. The face is a great revealer. We cannot be uncharitable without losing the fine mobility of features. The people that carry out Christ's program of forgiveness are earth's choice spirits. They win their way everywhere. Every door is open to them. Brightness comes before them, their shadow always falls behind them. They "create a great, sweet, compelling light around us while they are with us, and leave a long, quiet twilight in our memories after the sunsetting."

VII

CONCERNING PRAYER

THE importance which Jesus attached to prayer appears in the place that prayer occupied in his own life and in the prominence that he gave to it in his teaching. Christ's life and ministry moved in an atmosphere of frequent, protected, earnest prayer. All the great incidents of his life were related to prayer. He prayed at his baptism; and, so Luke records, "Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened." He prayed on the Mount of Transfiguration; "and as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering." He prayed at the grave of Lazarus; and "he that was dead came forth." He prayed in the upper chamber when he instituted the Holy Supper. He prayed in the Garden; and so mighty was the spiritual wrestle that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." He prayed on the cross; and that prayer still hushes us into a holy silence. But it was not alone in crises that Jesus prayed. Prayer was the habit of his life. This so impressed the disciples that

they asked him to impart the secret to them: "Lord, teach us to pray."

And he did. A careful reading of the Gospels shows that Christ said as much, if not more, on the subject of prayer as on any other single theme, except that of the kingdom, and that he gave very definite instruction on the matter. This instruction is not given in any formal order, but is found embedded and ingrained in the utterances of Jesus.

According to his teaching the central and controlling idea of prayer is communion with God. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." The word translated "closet," or as in the Revised Version "inner chamber," is unusual. It is used four times only in the New Testament: and in each instance conveys the idea of secret place, of seclusion, of aloneness. "Closet" defines any place where one may be alone with God. Abram's closet was the oak at Mamre. Isaac's closet was the field at Hebron. Hezekiah's closet was the sick bed. Peter's closet was the housetop. Christ's closet was the mountain top. The place of seclusion is a matter of indifference; the act is the thing important. Aloneness with God, communion with him, that is where the emphasis is to be placed. One does not need necessarily to withdraw from his associates or surroundings in order to have this communion. Seclu-

sion does not mean exclusion. The "closet" may be the crowded street; it may be the busy store. In order to enter into this "closet" one need not leave the jostling world nor wait till the daily task is done.

"There is a viewless, cloistered room,
As high as heaven, as fair as day,
Where, though my feet may join the throng,
My soul can enter in and pray.

"And never through those crystal walls
The clash of life can pierce its way,
Nor ever can a human ear
Drink in the spirit-words I say.

"One hearkening, even, cannot know
When I have crossed the threshold o'er;
For he alone, who hears my prayer,
Has heard the shutting of the door."

The man, mighty for God, in holy living or in active service, spends much time alone with God. The secret of his holy living or of his service lies not in what he does in the presence of men, but in what he does in the presence of God. He waits until he gets into touch with the power of God and then comes forth to do God's work. He who enters into the "closet" will come out with a new spirit of inspiration and mastery. He will teach with a new delight, he will preach with a new power, he will live with a new force. This is equipment for service — fellowship with God in "the secret place." Witness Luther, rising early to pray; witness Livingstone on his knees in his African hut;

witness Finney prostrate before God in the woods. Even the Hindu woman, becoming a Christian, learns the way to the best source of life and power, and sings:

"Would you like to know the sweetness of the secret of the Lord?
Go and hide beneath his shadow; this shall then be your reward;
And whene'er you leave the silence of that happy meeting place,
You must mind and bear the image of the Master in your face."

What a new power there would be in prayer for most of us if we could enter into the full meaning of Christ's thought of prayer — separation, secrecy, silence; not merely our talking with God, but God talking with us. Prayer is not the spreading out of our wants before God and then rushing away before he has the time to say to us what he would say. Prayer is waiting before God, in silence and in expectation, until out of the infinite fullness of peace and plenty and power there comes to us some new manifestation of himself, some new revelation of truth, some new consciousness of duty, some new power for service. Prayer is communion with God, talking with him and having him talk with us. Dr. McCosh summed it all up in two short sentences as sweet as they are simple. "I pray, God hears. God speaks, I listen."

A minister, while busy in his study one Saturday morning, heard a knock on the door. In response to his "Come in" his little girl of nine years entered. He asked her what she wanted and she answered, "Nothing." With some impatience he said: "You

should not have interrupted me on this busy day if you did not want anything. Why did you do it?" "Just to be with you, father," she replied. The minister forgot that he was busy, took the little one on his knee, and they had a half hour of delightful fellowship. Child of God, do you sometimes enter into the "closet," not to ask God for anything, not to tell him anything, but just to be with him? That is Christ's thought as to the central idea of prayer. It is communion, fellowship with God.

Christ also emphasized the fact that prayer is petition, a definite asking for a definite blessing. There is a notion which has some currency, that prayer is of value only in its effect on the man who prays, that its object is not so much to move God toward us as it is to move us toward God. Prayer has that effect and its subjective power is one of the blessings of prayer; but its subjective power depends upon its objective efficacy.

Christ's teaching on prayer as petition is epitomized in his utterance, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I think it is Andrew Murray that calls attention to the beautiful progression in these words, "Ask," and ye shall receive the gift; "seek," and ye shall find the giver; "knock," and ye shall be admitted into the fellowship. But the words bear another significance. They suggest the threefold condition of prevailing prayer. Ask,

seek, knock. These stand for definiteness, perseverance and intensity.

"Ask." Let there be definiteness of thought in prayer. The weakness of much of our praying is its indefiniteness — petitions without purposes, words without thoughts. "My words fly up," says the king in "Hamlet."

> "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
> Words without thoughts never to heaven go."

Peter says, "The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." The Revised Version is more definite, "Be ye therefore of sound mind, and be sober unto prayer." It is a call to serious thoughtfulness, to soberness of mind in prayer. It warns us that when we pray, the mind must not be intoxicated with worldly thoughts, with earthly plans, with sensuous pleasures, with trifling cares. The mind must be free and clear. When ye pray, "Ask," — this implies definiteness of thought — "and it shall be given you."

Jesus always insisted upon definiteness. He knew what Bartimæus wanted when he cried, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me" — but he demanded the definite petition, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Bartimæus answered, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." Instantly sight was imparted. So definitely prayed the publican, the Syrophœnician mother, the nobleman. A definite blessing was ever given in response to a definite request. "There's nae gude done, John, till

ye get into the close grups." So said Jeems, the doorkeeper, to Dr. John Brown, who gave us the immortal "Rab." This is one of the secrets of effective prayer — "the close grip" — the definite petition. "Ask," tell the Lord just what you want. That throws us back into self-examination. It forces us to face our deepest need. Too much of our praying is pointless and vague. Cease pouring out prayer in multitudinous petitions. Think of your need, or of the needs of others, and then "Ask, and it shall be given you."

"Seek." To definiteness there must be added perseverance. We should have something of Jacob's spirit when he said to God, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." God is not only a great Giver, he is sometimes a great Hider of his gifts. So it is in nature. The loaf is hidden in the grains of yellow wheat. The rich robe of silk is hidden in the crumpled worm. The pearl is hidden in the oyster. To get the pearl you must go into the depths. To obtain the gold you must descend into the mine. To secure the coal you must bore into the bowels of the earth. God hides his gifts that man may seek and find. He hides them that ingenuity and activity may be exerted in the search. He hides them that the search may quicken the desire and so increase the delight of the discovery. Things that are easily obtained are esteemed lightly. The struggle of getting intensifies the joy of possessing. In the spiritual realm God hides his blessings that we

may seek them, labor for them. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." The heavenly food is hidden, and its hiding place is just beyond the struggle to find it.

Unite the two words, "ask" and "seek." In the one you have purpose, in the other you have pursuit. Our prayers fashion our purposes and our purposes determine our ambitions and direct our energies. "Ask" — "seek." Our asking determines the trend of our search.

"Knock." To perseverance there must be added intensity. In the epistle to the Colossians Paul speaks of "laboring fervently" — literally, agonizing — "in prayers." That marks the solitary heights of prayer. It calls to our mind the scene in Gethsemane when Jesus, "being in an agony . . . prayed more earnestly." When we pray we must enter into something of that experience if we are to secure what we seek. As the athlete agonizes to win the prize, so must we agonize to obtain the divine blessing.

Prevailing prayer is not without its cost. A Kalmuck erected in his garden a windmill and to it fastened a prayer. As the mill turned round he said, "That is just one more prayer going to heaven." In some prayers that are offered by human lips there is as little heart as there was in the prayer fastened to the Kalmuck's mill. Go on no longer with a useless formality in prayer. Give up the mere performance, and pray, pray until, as it were, you

sweat drops of blood. Put your heart in your prayers. Cost you something it will; something of thought, something of emotion, something of nervous energy, something of spiritual agony; but such asking will end in receiving. The heart it is that prays; not the knees, not the hands, not the lips, but the heart. If your prayers are to be answered they must be as arrows shot from the heart. None other fly to the throne of God. You may repeat your prayers every day; you may be as punctual to the hour as the Moslem, who drops on his knees in public assembly or in crowded street; but the prayers of the lip, the tongue, the memory; the prayers of the wandering mind, of dead formality, are in the sight of God an abomination, no better than the venal prayers of Rome, no more efficacious than the revolutions of the Tartar's wheel. Let the heart go out to God. Be even as the poor publican. There was nothing artistic, nothing eloquent, nothing rhetorical about his prayer. It was plain, pointed and maybe inelegant, but he prayed from the heart and so obtained what he sought — forgiveness. The Pharisee's prayer was polished and beautiful, but it was a miserable travesty on prayer. It was merely a self-complacent soliloquy. He expressed no want. He framed no petition. He simply rehearsed his religious ritual and enumerated his good qualities. His thanksgiving was but self-congratulation. It was merely playing at prayer. But the publican, with bowed head, smiting upon his breast,

as though his heart were more vile than his life, cried mightily to God. He cared little what words he used, if he could get the thought of his heart before God. His prayer was born out of his pressing need. It was no long prayer. It was the sharp cry of a soul in distress. When the heart is pierced it speaks in the terse terms of the telegram. Its words are winged; its language, exclamatory — "Lord, save us: we perish." "Lord, save me." "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." One may say much and make a short prayer. One may utter hardly a sentence, and yet there may be in that sentence the condensation of a whole liturgy. If you would ask that you may receive, let your prayer be simple and direct. Jesus warns against needless repetitions, against much speaking, against ostentation, against pomposity of manner and language. Sincere speech is always simple. It studies short, plain sentences. It discards ornament. Sincerity vibrates with earnestness. It inspires persistence. "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

All true prayer is — what all intelligent labor is — a mode of coagency, of coöperation, of correspondence with God. There are in nature rich treasures that God means to give us, but they become ours only through diligent labor. Coöperation is the secret of enrichment. God has provided the treasures — gold, silver, copper, coal — we labor to secure them. There are in the rich treasury of grace many things that God would and wills to give us, but this he

cannot do save through our persistent and persevering prayer. What labor is in the gaining of the riches of nature, that prayer is in the securing of the riches of grace. Prayer is not the lowering of God to the level of our infirmities; it is the exaltation of our will and of our intellect and of our spirit into his fellowship; it is an active and vigorous correspondence with the plan and purpose of God. "Prayer," says Austin Phelps, "means that I am to be raised in feeling into union of design with him; that I am to enter into his counsels."

There is much said and written about the intellectual difficulties of prayer. "You read a good deal in current literature about the difficulties which our knowledge of the all-pervading character of law causes in regard to the efficacy of prayer. There is no more intellectual difficulty in this regard with respect to prayer than there is with respect to any human activity. Back of all is the problem that baffles us all. It is this: How is it that while God governs all things with an absolute will, yet the whole of success for you and me depends upon our freely chosen activity, so that if we do not exert ourselves we are not enriched?"

That as a problem does indeed baffle us all, but as a fact of life it does not trouble us. The energy that we put forth in our life work brings us into alignment with God and thereby insures our success. So is it in things spiritual. Through prayer we are brought into correspondence with the divine

purpose, and so there flows forth upon us, our friends, our family, our Church, our nation, the blessings that God has in store for them that ask him — that ask him, I mean, in the praying that has behind it the exerted will, the persistent purpose, the agonized heart.

Christ also clearly defines the law of prayer. In defining that law he assumes it as true that the man who truly prays believes in God as a living, personal being, that the man who truly prays is in a right relation with God — "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" — that the man who truly prays is inspired by pure motives.

The man so praying must be obedient to Christ's law of prayer. It is this: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." This statement defines the law of prayer and also the scope of prayer. The law is this: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you." The scope is this: "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." That is a broad scope. It passes our comprehension. The translation of the Greek words may be thought to be too free, but in the original the meaning is even broader than that conveyed by the English translation. The Revised Version gives some intimation of this broader meaning. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

What a realm of tremendous possibility! But

that realm Jesus safeguards. "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." That is the realm of prevailing prayer, but into it none has ever gone save through the narrow wicket gate over which is written these words: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you."

The first condition on which the great promise is fulfilled is this: "If ye abide in me." This is not activity: it is passivity. When we cease from doing, give up our own life, rest absolutely in him who is our life, leave everything to him, then we are in a position to claim the promise. Abiding in Christ means a life inspired by the motive of Christ's life — the will of God — and conformed to the method of Christ's life — doing the will of God.

To the great promise there is a second condition: "If . . . my words abide in you" — as a sanctifying power, as a revelation of God's will, as an assurance of God's promise.

These two conditions, which define the law of prayer, concern the man who prays. If his life is right his prayer prevails. The prayer that "availeth much" is "the prayer of a righteous man." The righteous man is distinct from the good man. The righteous man is the "right" man, the man who lives in the will of God. The righteous man — and apart from Christ there are none such — is the man made right, the man who loves the law of God, the man of obedience, the man that wants only what he has the right to have. That is the salient point in the law

of prayer as it is taught by Jesus. It might be read, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall demand what ye have the right to as your due; and it shall be given to you." In other words, ye shall ask only for what ye have the right to have, and it shall be given you. If you are in Christ, and his words are in you, the very thoughts and desires of your heart will be his; and your one prayer will be, "Thy will be done." There is no prayer transcending that. It is the very synthesis of prayer. When you pray that prayer you are moving along the line of the divine plan, you are keeping step with God as he moves majestically onward to the fulfillment of his purpose. To the man who thus prays within the realm of the divine will is given the definite promise, "Whatsoever ye will, . . . it shall be done unto you." (R.V.) He discovers that God actually answers prayer, and in that discovery there comes to him a delight to do the will of him in whose realm of love he lives.

"I worship thee, sweet Will of God,
And all thy ways adore;
And every day I live I seem
To love thee more and more."

VIII

CONCERNING JOY

IN a supreme sense the life of Jesus was a life of purest joy. In the midst of its sufferings and its sorrows he spoke frequently of his joys. "His nature had attributes as glorious as the music born out of them." In the shadow of the cross he rejoiced in spirit. On the night of the betrayal, when the dark clouds were closing round him, he said to his disciples, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

These words strike the keynote of his life. It was a life of joy. It could not be anything else, for it was a perfect life; perfect physically, perfect mentally, perfect spiritually: and all three, the physical, the mental and the spiritual, have their part in the making of joy. The physical nature in normal and healthy development throbs with rhythmical joy. If the body is unhealthful, or if the law of its nature is violated, it inflicts the penalty of pain. So with the mind. When the intellectual faculties are unimpaired, and working without hindrance, their activities produce the emotion of joy. But if they

are impoverished, or are wrongly dealt with, they cause suffering. So it is with the spirit. When the human spirit is in perfect harmony with the eternal Spirit there is unfailing joy. When that harmony is broken, there is enduring sorrow. Pain is of the body, suffering is of the mind, sorrow is of the spirit. No one of them is normal. Each of them is a mark of imperfection, a sign of weakness and of limitation. In a perfect being, with every fiber and faculty and force of that being acting normally, joy is the inevitable condition.

Yet Jesus suffered, he suffered as none other ever has suffered, and through suffering he was made perfect. But he suffered because he took on him and bore the burden of the sin of the world; the imperfection and the limitation, the guilt and the penalty of humanity. His was a vicarious suffering. He did not suffer through personal weakness or imperfection. In himself there was the fullness of joy. And his mission was to recover and restore man so that in him joy might abide and abound.

We must not think that sorrow may be wholly eliminated from human hearts. There is a boundless plain between joy and sorrow. The one is sunshine; the other is cloud. The one is a song; the other is a cry. There is not, nor can there be, kinship between the two. But there is a strange likeness. The tear does not always express sorrow. Often it expresses our deepest joys. There is a mystical union between our smile and our tears, because of the mingling of

joy and sorrow. But in all this mingling it is the thought and purpose of Christ that joy shall triumph.

Christianity is a religion of joy. "The essence of Christianity," said the great German poet, "is the worship of sorrow." This is a false conception of Christianity. Sorrow lies bleeding at the center of Christianity, yet out of this gospel of the Saviour's suffering there comes the joy of humanity. Christianity was inaugurated with a note of joy. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The birth of Jesus was the most joyful event of history. At his birth the heavens rejoiced. The shepherds, at midnight on the Judean hills, saw the glory of God and from the effulgent light came the chorus, in which a multitude of angel voices united, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The day on which Mary gave birth to the infant Jesus in the stable of Bethlehem was a day of ineffable joy. Joy in the heart of God; joy among the angels; joy that thrilled all heaven, and will yet thrill all the earth: for it will be caught up and repeated in the everlasting song before the throne. The joyous announcement of the birth of Christ struck the keynote that rules the music of Christianity. In the triumphant swell of joy the minor tones of sadness and sorrow are lost. Christianity is set to the key of joy. It is a pæan of victory.

The teaching of Jesus is full and overflowing with the thought of joy. He taught that fullness of joy should be the experience of all believers, and he said that this experience would be realized through his joy abiding in them. Shallow and fleeting are all delights that come from sources separated from Christ.

> "Pleasures are like poppies spread;
> You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
> Or like the snowfalls in the river,
> A moment white, then gone forever."

The pursuit of the world is happiness, the promise of Christ is joy. Between the two there is a vast difference. There is a hint of that difference in the words themselves. Happiness is that which happens, or that comes to one by hap, by some favorable condition. Some outward circumstance or fortune brings delight to the soul and so creates happiness. Joy differs from this in being inherent in the man himself. This appears in the original form of the word "joy," which, instead of suggesting a "hap" literally, means a leap or a spring. The radical idea of joy is this: the life is in such order and beautiful harmony, has such springs opened in its own blessed virtues, that it pours forth like a fountain a supreme joy. The motion is outward from within, and not, as in happiness, inward from without. It is the bliss not of condition, but of character. It is of ourselves, not external to ourselves. Coleridge, distinguished always for the exactness of his language, emphasizes the fact that joy is in oneself:

Joy, virtuous lady, joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure and in their purest hour,
Life and life's affluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, lady, is the spirit and the power
That wedding nature gives to us, gives in dower
A new earth and a new heaven, —
We in ourselves rejoice.

"We in ourselves rejoice" — that is joy and it is abiding and satisfying. Joy is within our own souls. Hence Jesus prays, "that my joy might remain in you." This is something above and beyond the joys of common life. It is a peace and a calm and a content that keep us serene and quiet in the midst of our dreariest hours, our sorest burdens, our bitterest pain. When the soul is in perfect fellowship with Jesus,

"The night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

This condition is for all men, but it is possible only to the man that receives Jesus Christ into his life. The mistake that so many make is that they seek joy in things without, not in character within; they have all faith in fortune, not in character. They build palaces and accumulate splendors and keep a dreary desert within the heart. And then, since the desert within cannot rejoice in the plenty without, they sigh and are sad. Let men come to Jesus Christ, really and honestly receive Christ into their lives, enter into his joy, and there will be an end of sadness. This is what all men want and need. All

are on a mad chase after joy, but they are seeking it in wrong places. They are looking for it in external things, in health, in wealth, in fame, in position. They tell us that when we shall have achieved this, when we shall have won that, we shall be happy. The birds will then sing, and all the day will be golden. But in claiming all this they are ignoring the experiences of all that have sought and failed to find joy in such ways.

Jesus indorses and encourages man's quest of joy, and he teaches how it may be attained. His teaching on this subject appeals to us. It satisfies our sense of fitness as no other teaching on the subject does.

All the great teachers have spoken on the subject of joy. Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, teaches that happiness is found in Nirvana, a word that means "blown out." The idea of the Buddhist is that happiness is to be found in absolute extinction of self, in annihilation of personality. To him the way to reach happiness is to empty oneself of all desire, so that, at last, at the extinction of life and personality, there will be no regret. Aristotle taught that "happiness is the supreme good; but, while this is not attained without virtue, virtue alone cannot secure it. Happiness requires, in addition to virtue, certain outward advantages such as health, riches and friends." According to the teaching of Epicurus, "Man is happy when he floats through life unharming and unharmed, idle, useless, self-contained and self-sufficing."

Of these theories Jesus indorses none. He taught that joy is possible only when the life itself is harmoniously organized. Hence he conditioned the realization of joy on man's relation to God. In his master parable of the Vine and the Branches, Christ's deepest teaching on the subject of joy is found. This was the last parable spoken by our Saviour. The late Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, easily chief among the men that have found the hidden springs in God's Word, has shown that the whole teaching of the parable revolves about seven words. The words are these: Vine, Branch, Fruit, Abide, Ask, Love, Joy. The first three, Vine, Branch, Fruit, are closely associated and teach the secret of confidence in approaching God, and of power in prayer. The last two words, Love and Joy are likewise intimately associated, and touch the depths and heights of Christian experience.

Our purpose is not to attempt an analysis of this parable, nor a statement of its general teaching, but simply to learn one thing from the parable — its teaching on the subject of Christian joy. Jesus says: "These things have I spoken unto you," for what? "that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." This parable is a purposed and deliberate communication of Christ's secret of joy.

In his secret of joy the first element is a conscious sense of dependence upon God. Christ lived in the consciousness of his oneness with the Father. This

consciousness colored his whole life and teaching. "I and my Father are one." He never lost sight of his oneness with the Father, and that kept him in abiding peace and joy, despite all the sorrows and trials that he endured.

Oneness with God! This is Christ's secret of joy. At one with, and at peace with God, joy sings in the soul. Peace and joy! There is a certain kind of joy that has in it no peace. It is feverish and unstable. It is ever seeking some new source of inspiration. It is too eager to be associated with rest, or to enjoy fellowship with repose. And there is a peace that has in it no joy, no gladness, no sparkle, no beauty. But the joy that flows from peace with God is rich and full and perfect. These two — peace and joy — are linked and locked together. "Peace I leave with you." "These things have I spoken unto you, . . . that your joy might be full." "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The parable teaches that identity with Christ issues in joy. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." As on some spring morning we look on the exuberant life, the bursting into bud and leaf of the branch, we know that these are not of itself. They spring from the life and vigor of the vine. The life of the vine pushes itself to the surface and throbs in the branch, transforming its barrenness into foliage and blossom and fruit. Union with Christ, for life and

for vigor, for flower and for fruit — that is the secret of joy.

But there is more than dependence in the symbol of the vine and the branches. The microscope reveals the fact that the fibers of the branch grow into the vine stock and that the fibers of the vine stock grow into the branch and interlock. So it is spiritually. Jesus says, "Abide in me, and I in you." That word "abide" reveals the second element in Christ's secret of joy. It is the reality of the presence of God in our lives. All of us, doubtless, have times and moods when we are tempted to feel that God is so far away from us that it is impossible for him to give us help or comfort. So much of the pagan lingers in the Christian as gives credence to the heathen notion that the Infinite of eternity is above caring for us, the creatures of a day. But all that feeling is dispelled when we perceive that God in Christ has stooped to humanity and has entered into its life. God draws near to us in Jesus Christ, and, as the result, peace and joy and hope fill our souls. Henceforth, however rough the path, however bleak the winds, however dark the night, the pilgrim is able to push on his way, because the sense of a present God fills the soul. The hunger of the soul is for the nearness of God. The reason the Christian longs for heaven is not because the harps of gold sound forth their sublime melodies, not because the angels are there, not even because we shall meet again with our loved ones; but because

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Jesus Christ is there. That is heaven — fellowship with Christ. We may have, as it were, days of heaven upon earth. For one to have Christ abide with him is to have in his heart the joy of heaven.

Christ's sacred joy was founded on the mutual love and communion between the Father and himself. As the Father loved him, so he loves his disciples. We have in Christ the same foundation for our abiding joy that Christ had in the Father. A peace that passes all understanding keeps the minds and hearts of millions. Seek for the secret of this peace, and you will find it in the consciousness of the personal presence and love of Jesus, the consciousness of being one with him. If you are truly united to Jesus Christ by faith, you grow into him and he grows into you. Every day the fibers of his divine being penetrate you more completely, and every day the fibers of your life penetrate him more completely; so that not only is the union indissoluble, but increasingly real and blessed. As you grow into him, and he grows into you, the carnal is subdued, the selfish is eliminated; out of such subjugation joy and happiness spring.

Growing out of this consciousness of oneness with God there will be a deep sense of the love of God, and that is another element in Christ's secret of joy — a sense of the love of God. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye

shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." The reference here is not to our love toward Christ, but to his love toward us. If you are abiding in Christ, you need not think of your love toward God. You are simply to receive from Jesus Christ the love of God until it fills and floods your whole being. Nothing thrills the soul with joy as does the sense of the love of God. Jesus teaches that a man should live in such association with God, with such a sense of God's presence and love that in his daily tasks he should find joy, that there should be victory in business and in care and in labor.

Another element in Christ's secret of joy is fruitfulness. The whole parable seems to center about the word "fruit." "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. . . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. . . . Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever

ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." These utterances reveal one of the secrets of Christian joy. It is this: Usefulness, service, activity. Christ's joy was the joy of free activity in holy service, like the joy of motion in health, like the song of a bird in the morning, the joy of doing good without trying to do it. Christ practically says in this parable, "Repeat my life of going about doing good, and my joy will remain in you, and your joy shall be made full." "He that abideth in me . . . the same bringeth forth much fruit." The joy of the Christian is not the gift of God. I have read somewhere of a lad, who thought that joy was a thing made in lumps, which were in heaven, and when people prayed for it, pieces were let down and fitted into their souls. That may be a crude conception, but in its essential features it harmonizes very closely with the conception of many Christians. They think that joy can be had for the asking. Joy, Jesus teaches, is a fruit, and all fruit is the result of growth. Henry Drummond tells of a very clever trick in India called the Mango Trick. A seed is put in the ground and covered up, and after divers incantations a full-blown mango bush appears within five minutes. Mr. Drummond says he never met anyone that believed it to be anything other than a conjuror's trick. Men may not know how fruit matures, but they know that it cannot be grown in five minutes. Joy is a fruit. You must sow the seed to have the fruit. If you

have never planted the seed of joy, you will never reap its fruit. The seed which yields the fruit is a life of holy activities. It is the Christian who is doing nothing for the well-being of his fellow men who is despondent and gloomy. There is no mystery about Christian joy. The infallible recipe for joy is "Do good!" and the infallible recipe for doing good is to abide in Christ.

Thomas Carlyle once asked, in his grim, gruff way: "What is thy happiness? Who toldest thee that thou hadst a right to be happy?" As a Christian I answer: My happiness is the happiness of Jesus Christ. On what does it rest? This: a conscious sense of dependence upon God in Christ, a realization of the presence of God through Christ, an appreciation of the love of God in Christ, the giving of self to the help of others, and so bearing fruit to the glory of God.

The secret of all this is to look away from self to Jesus. True joy is not the joy that we can make or manufacture, but the joy that comes from Christ's joy dwelling in us. This is the meaning of these words of Christ, "That my joy might remain in you," and, as the result, "that your joy might be full." The joy of the branch is the joy of the vine pulsing through the branch. We are to look away from ourselves to Jesus. If you center your thought upon yourself, your faults, your failings, your weaknesses, you will be a weeping Christian. If you fix your thought on Christ, his love, his grace, his

favor, you will become a singing Christian. Lose sight of self in thinking about Christ. Abide in him, and his joy will remain in you, and your joy will be made full. His joy remains! Your joy is full!

IX

CONCERNING CONSECRATION

THE intercessory prayer of the Master is the Holy of holies of the divine Book. It is the revelation of the deepest thought and the most earnest concern of Jesus for his followers. As Dr. Gregg says, it is in the truest sense an accurate revelation of the will of God concerning us. In this prayer our Master offered four petitions that have a direct bearing on the consecration of his followers. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one." (R.V.) "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." In these four petitions there are presented the Prerequisite of Consecration, the Nature of Consecration, the Purpose of Consecration, the Pattern of Consecration.

The Prerequisite of Consecration. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one."

(R.V.) Around the followers of Christ is to grow up a society in which his ideals shall be cherished, and a mighty enterprise fostered, whose ultimate purpose is to subdue to Christ all the people of the earth. These results can never be achieved if his disciples are other than "men in a world of men." Hence the Master's prayer, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world." (R.V.) Human society, with all its possibilities of good and evil, is the sphere of their service. But while they are to be "men in a world of men," they must not be worldly men. "I pray . . . that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one." (R.V.) "Not abstraction from the world, but protection from the evil. The deliverance is to be effected, not by the removal of the body, but by the reënforcement of the spirit." The Christian is to live in the world, but he is to live in fellowship with God, in harmony with his will, in sympathy with his purpose, in the power of his Spirit. The will of God is the categorical imperative. It must lay hold of our inmost nature and bind us to duty by every law of our being.

It is one thing to live in right relations with our neighbors; this society and custom require; it is another thing, not contrary to it but a greater thing, to live in right relations with God and his holy law. In that relationship we rise to the heights of our being and vindicate our redeemed life as having its origin in God. The lines — among the sublimest

in English poetry — translated by Dr. Johnson from Boëthius, express this idea:

> From thee, great God, we spring; to thee we tend,
> Path, Motive, Guide, Original and End.

That is the idea of separation from the world which Jesus emphasizes — a life in God, a life whose way, motive, guide, beginning and end is all of God. Jesus said, "I do always those things that please him." What God was he was. What God felt he felt. What God did he did. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." It is possible, through the work of God's Spirit in us, to live such a life in the world. Such a life transfigures all that it touches or does. It converts honesty into honor, faith into faithfulness, love into loving-kindness, truth into trueness. Piety gives strength to purpose and substance to duty. The world may not, but God does appreciate such lives. The world saw in Calvin and in Luther and in Knox erratic reformers; God saw in them mighty forces for righteousness. The world saw in Patrick Hamilton, in Richard Cameron and in Hugh McKail misguided enthusiasts; God saw in them the emancipation of Scotland. The world saw in Carey and in Martyn and in Judson blind visionaries; God saw in them the evangelization of the world. The reverse of the world's opinion is ever God's judgment.

This is the Prerequisite of Consecration — a life attuned to God so that its every fiber and faculty and force vibrate in harmony with the divine music.

In the biography of Dr. Dale by his son there is a reference to a discovery made after his father's death. On his study desk lay a sheet of an unfinished sermon, with its last sentence — the last words that he wrote — broken off in the middle. It states the law by which his life had been ruled; it suggests in its incompleteness the mystery of the great hope into which he had entered:

"Unworldliness does not consist in the most rigid and conscientious observance of any external rules of conduct, but in the spirit and temper, and in the habit of living created by the vision of God, by constant fellowship with him, by a personal and vivid experience of the greatness of the Christian redemption, by the settled purpose to do the will of God always, in all things, at all costs, and by the power of the great hope, the full assurance, that after our mortal years are spent, there is a larger, fuller, richer life in ——"

But there he had broken the sentence, and had passed to the realization of his great hope.

The Nature of Consecration. "Sanctify them through thy truth." Truth is more than knowledge, and to be "sanctified through the truth" means more than to have a knowledge of the Word of God. It means that the Word of God shall be the molding force of the life. Truth is knowledge wrought into the actualities of character and life. To hold truth is one thing; to be held by truth is quite another thing. Christ did not pray that we might know

the truth, but that we might be sanctified through the truth, that the truth might have its full effect upon our lives. In other words, that the things we know we may become. This is essential to all service. The measure of our service is the measure in which we ourselves are what Christ would have us be. Being is basal to doing. The primal questions for us are not how many times can I preach, how many meetings can I conduct, how often can I teach, how much can I do; but how much can I be of the things I believe and preach and teach and do? The teacher or preacher is ultimately the man. The essence of teaching or of preaching lies in personality. The important thing is that truth should come not from us, but through us, having mingled with our blood and made the circuit of our veins, having touched the very center of our being, and then come out to men in the color of our own life-blood. Dr. Fairbairn tells us that "every truth that enters the world enters through an individual, a conscious, reasonable, moral man; and the measure of good a man brings depends upon his quality." The character of the teacher or preacher determines the power of his message. Great as any idea may be, to be potential, it must be embodied. Carlyle called the French Revolution, "Truth clad in hell fire." Truth has to be clad somehow before men yield to it. Truth is mighty and prevailing only when it is incarnated. Tennyson well expresses the idea that I am trying to emphasize when he sings:

The Word had breath and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought.

Christ prayed that the truth might so master the lives of his people that they would become revelations of it, shining as lights in the world. That takes power, spiritual power. It takes more power to be than to do. It takes more power to live a godly life than it does to sing and shout.

The story is told of a preacher that wanted electric light in his study. There was in the house an electric battery that was used for the ringing of various bells. Knowing very little about electricity, he fancied that if the battery could ring a bell it could make a light, and so he ran wires from the battery into his study. Then he adjusted an electric bulb, turned the key and was disappointed to find that he got no light. He consulted an electrician. He said: "I have a battery in my house that has been ringing all the bells for a long time. I thought that this battery that could so well ring bells could light my study. I tried and it failed. What is the matter?" The electrician looked at him and said, "Do you not know that it takes much more power to make a light than it does to ring a bell?" More power to make a light than to make a noise! More power so to live that your light shall so shine before men that they shall glorify

your Father, than to be active in ten thousand organizations and movements.

The Purpose of Consecration. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Christ's mission in the world was twofold — the revelation of God to man, and the reconciliation of man to God. So the Christian is in the world to make Christ known to men and to bring men into fellowship with Christ. This teaches us that consecration or sanctification is in order to service. There is a great danger of seeking some blessing of devotion, of dedication, of consecration for personal enjoyment.

I was very much impressed with Dr. Campbell Morgan's comment on the words of James: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Campbell Morgan says: "There is a sense in which that word 'lusts' is a very unfortunate one in that text, because we read the text and think that Jesus meant that the people to whom he wrote were seeking blessings, and then were indulging in some vulgar and profane form of sin. Nothing of the kind. Employ the word 'pleasures' instead of lusts. Not because the suggestion of that word is less vulgar, but because it is more searching and awful. The place where that sin of asking amiss may happen most effectively is at Keswick, or Southport, or Mundesley, or right in the midst of church life. We want sanctification; we sing of Beulah land; we long for the

high, ecstatic experience and the thrill of the divine love. What for? For our own pleasures. Then James says, You cut the nerve of prayer. The Church of God to-day is cursed by spiritual selfishness. It becomes an appalling question sometimes to my heart as to how far one is justified in preaching and teaching people if they are simply consuming upon their own pleasures."

These earnest, searching words of the great preacher should be considered, in emphasizing the fact that consecration is not for our personal comfort, satisfaction or well-being, but in order to service. The light that is in us is not for the illumination of our own lives alone, but that we may flash it upon some darker soul.

The Pattern of Consecration. "For their sakes I sanctify myself." Christ expressed his sanctification, first, as submission to God; second, as service to men, and third, as sacrifice, in which both submission and service combine. This must be the expression of our consecration — submission to God; then shall we be controlled and used by One who eternally succeeds — but used only as we give ourselves to the service of our fellow men and to sacrifice for the kingdom's sake.

Consecration is to follow Jesus, and to follow Jesus is to have the best, the richness and fullness of life and of influence, of power and of service; is to contribute to the highest glory to God. Consecration is the attaining of the best that God has for his people.

"There's scarcely one but vaguely wants
In some way to be blessed;
It is not blessing, Lord, I seek;
I want thy very best.

"I want in this short life of mine,
As much as may be pressed
Of service true for God and man:
Help me to give thy best.

"I want amid the victor throng
To have my name confessed,
And hear my Saviour say at last,
'Well done! you took the best.'"

While I was writing these words my mind contemplated some consecrated men and what God had achieved through them. I was with Savonarola in the market place at Florence, and saw Italy moved Godward. I visited the Wartburg in the Black Forest, and saw Germany revived. I spent a moment before the historic house in High Street at Edinburgh, and listened to the thrice repeated cry of Knox, "Give me Scotland or I die"; and I saw Scotland awakened. I went to Greyfriars churchyard, stood there over the stone on which the Covenant was laid, and I saw the Covenanters sign it, some with their own blood, and I knew that in the keeping of such men the crown rights of Jesus were secure.

I stood beneath the window of the prison cell at Bedford and heard John Bunyan crying, "I will stay here until the moss grows over my eyebrows sooner than deny my Lord"; and I saw the Pilgrim's Progress through the ages. I slipped into Cambridge

and heard Henry Martyn decline the high office and honors that were offered him, that he might go to India. I followed him as he carried the light of God's love into India. I was with him while he lay yonder, stricken with the fatal fever, alone, no friendly voice to comfort him, no kindly hand to minister to him. I saw him as he thrust among the damp boxes of his luggage his fevered brow that it might be cooled, just before his great spirit went back to God, whose he was; and then I saw India awaken to the light of the glory of that gospel which Henry Martyn lived and preached.

I roamed with David Brainerd through the American forest, saw how destitute he was of all human fellowship and of all creature comforts, and yet found that of them he never thought, so intent was he on saving the American Indian. I heard him cry, "O that I were a flame of fire in the hand of my God." I came back into the Massachusetts cemetery, and stood at the grave of Brainerd and at the other grave of fair Jerusha Edwards, whom Brainerd loved but did not live to wed; and standing there, I asked, What is the value of such devotion and of such self-sacrifice? The answer came in the realization of the service that Brainerd had rendered for the American Indian and for the world.

I stood on the dock as the vessel that was to carry a band of missionaries to far-away lands sailed away. I heard friends make their final plea to a

Moravian missionary to remain at home, and, in the lines of the hymn, I heard his answer:

"I hear a voice you cannot hear
Which bids me not to stay,
I see a hand you cannot see
Which beckons me away."

I entered into Finney's room and heard him pray, and I saw how he lost his might and how he gained his power. I stopped awhile with Coleridge Patteson, the pure-minded son of Eton, and then with Horace Tracy Pitkin, who by a missionary's life and a martyr's death in China glorified Yale's blue flag; and I saw the new republic rise.

I walked with John G. Paton through the islands of the sea, and saw the New Hebrides transformed. I listened to Dwight Lyman Moody and heard him with profound humility, say, "There shall be one man, given up to God, to show the world what God can do with a surrendered life."

Fellowship with such men fired my imagination; my soul was thrilled, my whole being was quickened into a realization of what God can do with those that put themselves at his disposal. That is consecration. It is not a unique experience for a privileged few. That was the lie of medievalism, and it obtains to this day in the thought of some. Consecration is not abnormal: it is the normal life of the child of God, not the life as it is ordinarily lived, but the life as it should be lived. Consecration is simply a recognition and realization of what we

profess and should possess. We say that we are Christ's. Consecration is being Christ's. We say that we have given ourselves to Christ. Consecration is letting him have his way with us because we belong to him.

The fact of Christ's ownership of us is asserted in a hundred ways. Paul declares it in a phrase that Dr. Moule calls "the watchword of obligation and the oracle of surrender." That phrase is this, "Ye are not your own." That phrase defines the Christian believer as the purchase and the possession of Christ. In the most prosaic and practical way the Christian is the property of Christ. Paul urges this with constant and insistent emphasis. No words are too plain to define and to defend the fact. Paul never felt a tremor of that sensitive shudder that almost shatters some folk over what they are pleased to call a commercial gospel. These are Pauline words, "Bought," "Bought with a price," "Redeemed us (that is, bought out) from the curse of the law," "Purchased with his own blood."

The only adequate rest and rightness possible to the Christian come from a ready assent and cordial consent to the fact that he is not his own. When he recognizes and lives in this fact he is in position for the best life and the finest service. "Is the branch for the tree? Its life and freedom lie in its absolute cohesion. Is the limb for the body? Dislocate it, and it is in misery; amputate it, and it is in corruption. Set it, and let it be employed in its articulated

subjection, and it lives, it glows, it plays, as it works, in a perfect life." Is the Christian for Christ? Then the Christian's life and his liberty, his purity and his power, his rest and his resources all lie in his absolute bondage to Jesus Christ.

Consecration is the recognition of Christ's ownership. It must be full and complete. The lien of Christ's ownership of us is placed upon the whole being and upon all that goes with it. We cannot be consecrated at one point in the life. The consecration act extends to all points and to all relationships. It covers all the attitudes and all the actions of life, its feelings as well as its deeds. We are not men of consecration because we pray and read our Bibles, if at the same time we indulge or permit to abide in our hearts any feeling of jealousy or enmity toward any human being. While that feeling remains we cannot pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

To offer that prayer while any unkind feeling toward another lingers in our hearts, would be audacious: it would be but an imprecation. If we cannot offer that prayer in all honesty there is no consecration.

We are not consecrated men because we go to church, if we do not join with fervor in its services and enter zealously into its activities, or are indifferent to the need and the suffering of the great humanity outside of the church.

We are not consecrated men because we live upright lives, if at the same time we fail in sympathy with, and support of, the unfortunate and the

needy. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father" is not merely to keep oneself unspotted from the world, but "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."

Consecration is having the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, who forgave his enemies and prayed for them, who loved men and gave himself for them.

A consecrated man cannot sit at his own table without thinking of the destitute poor outside. His own personal comfort will stir him into a new and practical philanthropy. A consecrated man cannot look upon his own children, well clothed, well educated, well cared for, without thinking of the innumerable children that have no such blessing or privileges. His satisfaction with the condition of his own children will inspire him to service for all children.

A consecrated man cannot thank God for the blessings of his grace and love without thinking of those that neither know nor receive those mercies. The fact of his own salvation quickens his evangelistic zeal and stirs his missionary fervor. Consecration to Christ begins by giving him supreme leadership over the life: it ends only in sharing his plan to redeem the whole world.

Our consecration is personal and is along the lines of our own individuality. No soul has a duplicate. Each human personality is the incarnation of a distinct thought of God, and interprets and realizes the universe in its own private and privileged way. We must not perplex ourselves, and we must not

let others discourage us, because our consecration is unlike that of other Christian brethren. If it be genuine it will necessarily have features of its own. Only be sure of the fact, and then be content if the process has its own special complexion. Some people are never done telling us that we should not indulge this habit or do that act, that this or the other thing is not Christian. James has, on this point, a very strong word: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." Let us exercise our own exalted priesthood, and not let anyone come in as a priest between ourselves and our God. Let us not allow anyone to dictate to us what the will of God is concerning ourselves; but, on the other hand, let us be very zealous in our determination to discover the will of God, and be equally zealous in our dedication to that will.

That is consecration, and consecration is always genuinely personal. It has the marks of individuality. We must not be troubled if our religious experience does not conform to this or that type. It is bound to carry marks of individuality and singularity. Christian character becomes warped and unlovely, loses its spontaneity and sparkle, when coerced along lines foreign to the individuality. The kingdom of God, so far as it develops in us, must unfold on the lines of our own natural affinities and temperament. Consecration does not change Peter into Paul, does not transform John into Andrew, neither does it mold you into the likeness of another.

X

CONCERNING MASTERSHIP

EVERY life is subject to some controlling influence, to some particular mastership. Consciously or unconsciously everyone is, to some extent, dominated by some personality, gripped by some passion, influenced by some emotion, swayed by some ideal — in a word, everyone is in allegiance to some mastership. Jesus recognizes this: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." We cannot serve two masters; we must serve one. This is implied in the appeal: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The question is not whether we shall bear a yoke, but whose yoke shall it be? It is the necessity of our being to have some mastership; it is our privilege to choose that mastership.

Christ, in one of his interesting conversations with the disciples, defines the relation that should be sustained by these disciples toward the people. He defines their attitude in contrast with that of the official teachers in Judaism. These derived their

authority from their official position. They claimed attention on the ground of their civil and religious authority that gave them title to be heard and obeyed. Against such assumption of authority Jesus warns his disciples: "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ." Thus Jesus declares himself to be among men the one authoritative Teacher, the one efficient Leader, the one absolute Master.

"One is your Master, even Christ." We may have human helpers, human guides; men and women to unlock the door of our minds, to touch our eyes that we may see, to lead us into the knowledge of God and into the love of goodness. But the one Master of our lives is Christ.

Seven Greek words in the New Testament are translated "Master"; and of the seven words six are applied to Christ. The word that is used most frequently means "Lord." It occurs many times, and in most instances means "one who possesses," "the owner." It is the word that Jesus uses in the sense of master: "No man can serve two masters." Jesus is the Master-Owner. "Ye are not your own . . . ye are bought with a price."

The second word translated "Master" means literally "teacher." This word occurs about fifty-seven times in the New Testament, and of these

forty-seven are in the Gospels. In every passage in the Gospels, save two, the word is translated "Master." Jesus is the Master-Teacher.

The third Greek word is *rhabbi*, meaning "my teacher," or "my honored teacher." It is one of the first words used with reference to Christ's mastery over life. This conveys practically the same idea as the second, and names Christ as Teacher.

The fourth Greek word translated "Master" is one that means "superintendent," or "overseer." It is used only by Luke. Jesus is the Master-Overseer.

The fifth Greek word translated "Master" is the word from which we get the English word "despot." Its literal meaning is sovereign. The word is applied to Christ three times in the New Testament, and is used to state his absolute and perfect authority. Jesus is the Master-Authority.

The sixth word translated "Master" is a word that means literally "a leader." It is used only by Christ himself and that only in one instance, in Matt. 23:8–10. In this utterance Jesus declares himself to be the Master-Guide.

Jesus is the Master-Owner, the Master-Teacher, the Master-Overseer, the Master-Authority, the Master-Guide. The mastership of Christ flows from what he is.

In the realm of truth he is sovereign. He does not say, "I teach the truth"; "I declare the truth"; but rather "I am . . . the truth." Some, admitting

the peerless and preëminent rank of Jesus in the realm of truth, attempt to account for it on ground other than the intellectual. They declare that his mastery arises from his moral superiority, is the outcome of his stainless character, of his spotless life. Others find his supremacy in those heroic qualities that have evoked the enthusiasm of so many multitudes. Yet these qualities alone do not account for his transcendence. "Jesus is also the supreme example of genius in the realm of intellect. Solitary in his goodness, he is also supreme in his genius." It is the intellect, in the last analysis, the mind, that conquers. Christ was not satisfied simply to win man's affection by his kindness or to govern man's will by his authority, but he aimed to persuade man's mind with truth. Other teachers taught bits of truth, sections of truth. Their little systems are but broken fragments of Christ's truth. "The rainbow flings its seven colors against the cloud as a background, but the seven colors are only the one ray of light resolved; remelt the colors, and they become one again — you have the simple ray of light." "I am the light of the world," said the one imperial Teacher. Every truth is to be found in Christ, who is "the truth." Teachers, rare and brilliant teachers there may be, radiant colors in the rainbow, but they are the spectrum colors of the one Light.

Jesus, as Master of your thought life, means that you will have an abiding reverence for God's voice, as that voice speaks to you in his Word; that you

will have a sensitive spirit of responsiveness to the Holy Spirit, whose mission it is to lead you into all truth.

Christ's supremacy in the realm of character attests his mastership. The sublime supremacy of Jesus is the result of what he is rather than of what he says or does. He is the one absolutely perfect character, the full incarnation of all virtue, the highest expression of all love, all purity and all grace. He globes within himself all gentleness and goodness, all mercy and majesty, all compassion and courage, all sympathy and self-sacrifice, all light and love. From whatever side he is approached he presents the embodiment of perfection. His strong, simple, self-sacrificing, robust and harmonious manhood asserts his undeniable mastership. He is the ideal, the inspiration, the pattern, the very power of character. The acceptance of Jesus as master in the realm of character means that we will put our lives under the control of his sanctions of righteousness and of love. He is our leader. This is the meaning of "One is your Master." The Greek word means "leader": it has the sense of "setting an example." He has set us an example. He is our Master, leading and guiding us into the possession of a character after the pattern of his own, and into the prosecution of a career that will bring us to his glory.

"The steps of the way I know not,
But my Leader I know full well;
My hand is in his, I fear not —
In the depths of his peace I dwell.

He knows where he leads; I know not,
But I trust in his love each day;
My heart is his own; I fear not,
For the way is my Lord's highway."

Christ's supremacy in the realm of redemption attests his mastership. Through service he acquired dominion. Service rose to its highest level when Christ gave himself a sacrifice for man. Man is the servant of sin in bondage, held by sin's destroying grip. Coming into our life Jesus took that sin upon himself. He was made a curse for us that we might be delivered from the curse of the law. His "own self" — pure, spotless, holy self — "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." The Son of God took upon him the burden of our sin, went into the place of our deserved punishment, and in exchange for that gave us his peace. None other hath done this. None other need do this. This is it that enthrones Christ, that makes him irresistible — he died for us.

The story is told of a famous Frenchman who had done much for his countrymen, and who felt that he should do yet one thing more. He would invent a new religion for them, a religion that should replace the worn-out Christian faith. He outlined a creed that expressed what he said were the truths that could be verified. He composed a superb ritual that was to delight every æsthetic and emotional instinct. When he had carefully wrought out his creed and ritual he went on a preaching tour through France. Men came, and listened, and went away. He won no followers. He was humiliated and disappointed,

for he was deeply in earnest. In his chagrin and despair he went to consult his friend, Talleyrand. "It is a pity," said Talleyrand. "It is wonderful, too; but I will tell you what you must do: you must go and get crucified, and rise again from the dead on the third day, and then you will have followers." The cynical Talleyrand was right. The world will never make absolute master the one that cannot die for men. That is what Christ did. He died for us and by dying made himself our Master. "He . . . became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Jesus, as Master of our lives, means the giving of ourselves to him as Saviour, and the receiving of him into our lives as the controlling presence. It is not enough to put off the old man — the old tendency, the old energy — we must put on the new man, our lives must be yielded to the new energy. There is only one way of deliverance from the grip that self and sin and the world have upon us, and that is by the giving of ourselves in service to others. Christ is our Master, our Overseer, assigning to us our work and directing it. "All power is given unto me. . . . Go . . . and teach all nations."

CONCERNING MASTERSHIP

Christ's supremacy in the realm of life attests his mastership. He is our Lord. He was crucified and buried, but he arose from the dead. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." "Because I live, ye shall live also." Receiving Christ into your life as master means your deliverance from the grip of self, from the guilt of sin, from the grinding power of the world.

Christ's supremacy in the realm of eternity attests his mastership. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." A life yielded to Christ comes to its best both in this world and in the next. The life that was once tossed and torn between the conflicting masterships of self, the world and God, yields itself unto Christ for his ends; and lo! its own highest end is attained. There is peace, contentment, aspiration, eternal coronation. If the mastership of our lives is sin, then we are servants of sin, and the end of that servitude is death. If our master is love of power, we shall never get deliverance by trying to love power less. If our master is money acquisition, we shall not find deliverance by trying to bridle the pulse beats of our mercenary greed. If our master is passion of any sinful sort, we shall not obtain deliverance by any battle we may wage with interior desires or tendencies. We cannot get deliverance from evil by any process of destruction. "Self-repression is not salvation. Mutilated depravity is not holiness. Starved worldliness is not piety."

There is an old and familiar saying of Augustine: "The soul is restless till it rests in God." There is the newer word of Tennyson:

> Our wills are ours, we know not how,
> Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

There is the more blessed, the more abiding word of Jesus: "Follow thou me." Life is living in the will of God. That will is the only law of life that sets men free. That will is the only philosophy of life that makes men happy. That will is the only power of life that guarantees success. That will is the only assurance of eternal blessedness.

XI

CONCERNING ACHIEVEMENT

THE aim of every man," says Humboldt, "should be to secure the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole." "Our first object," says Sir John Lubbock, "should be to make the most and best of ourselves." In our personality are enfolded our powers, our possibilities, our destiny. The development of that personality is the primary duty. That duty presses upon everyone and everyone is capable of fulfilling it.

The man has never yet lived, whether he slept under a thatched roof or in a ceiled palace, that lacked the chance or the ability to hammer his soul into some divine shape. In the work of character-building the external circumstances and conditions are unimportant. Neither poverty nor riches are necessary to character. Neither brilliant attainments nor high position constitute essential conditions. One is not obliged to be a Raphael and paint a picture for the salon, nor to be a Beethoven and compose a sonata that will thrill the ages, nor to be a Milton and write a poem that will sing to

posterity, nor to be a Lincoln and issue a proclamation that will give freedom to a race: he need be no genius such as these in order to make the most of his life. Our position may be high or low, our responsibilities may be kingly or menial, our opportunities may be large or little, but in any place or position we may make the most of the life that we have.

Jesus recognizes the obligation laid upon man to make the most of his life, and he suggests the way of realizing it. "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." "He that is least among you all, the same shall be great." The chief emphasis of this utterance is not on the method Christ proposes, but on the fact that Christ indorses the thought that men should become great, should make the most of themselves. But in indorsing this ambition Jesus never awakens any thought nor kindles any emotion that is to end with the man himself. He teaches that self-culture is in order to service for others.

The word of authority on this subject is this saying, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." This saying of Christ, with a few minor changes, is recorded in each of the four Gospels, and in two of the Gospels it is recorded twice. In the fact that this utterance is recorded six times, we have an intimation of the

supreme importance that the Holy Spirit attaches to its teaching. It is one of the most poignant and penetrating utterances of Christ. It sinks down to the very foundation. It is Christ's secret of making the most of life.

In studying this utterance, in the six repetitions in the New Testament, we find that our Saviour uses four different words in telling us what we may do with our life. We may lose it, we may love it, we may find it, we may save it. The result of loving or finding or saving the life is the same, and that result is expressed in each passage by the one word "lose." "He that loveth his life shall lose it." "He that findeth his life shall lose it." "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." To love, to save, to find, is to lose.

The word translated "life" is the same in each of the six passages, and is a word that corresponds with the Hebrew word that is used in Genesis, when it is said that man became a "living soul." This should help us to understand the meaning of the term. The life which our Saviour warns us against loving, finding, saving, is this natural existence, this present, earthly life, alone and by itself, as though in and of itself it were a complete and finished thing. To love this life, to regard it as the chief object of affection and delight; to find this life, to search after it as the supreme attainment; to save this life, to be chary of it, to treasure it up — all these are but to lose life, life in the

larger meaning, in its fuller blessing, in its eternal abiding.

But with a negative warning the Master-Teacher does not stop. He gives a positive word of positive promise. "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." "He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." It must not be thought that in these utterances Jesus discounts the life that now is, in favor of the life that is to be. That he never did. The fact is that he always put emphasis on the life that now is. That the terms of the text indicate. This losing and finding of life do not mean the annihilation of one life and the setting in its place of some other life. Christ does not say: "Whosoever shall lose his life shall find the lost one replaced by another," but "Whosoever shall lose his life . . . shall save it," the same life, only transmuted, transfigured, glorified; and shall find it here and now; and not only that, but "shall keep it unto life eternal" — shall never lose it.

For one to live for the present, for his physical existence, would be for him to crowd and crush and crucify his only real genuine life. The real self is an immortal self. Therefore the natural life for us is a life lived in harmony with the eternal. This is why Christ made his appeal to human beings in the light of eternity. Every law that he laid down for the government of human life assumes that man is a spiritual being, and that he belongs not only

to time, but to eternity. The recognition of this fact, that man is essentially spiritual, that eternity is the supreme goal for every human existence, and that time and material things are unimportant compared with eternal and spiritual things, lies at the foundation of virtuous and vigorous character. It was this that made the Puritans the men that they were. It is quite common in some quarters to sneer at the Puritan, but Lord Macaulay reminds us that no one sneered at the Puritan who had met him in the halls of debate or on the fields of conflict where battles for human rights and freedom were being fought. There was a grimness, an austerity, about the Puritan that we may not admire. They were, however, men of power, and the principles that governed their lives and made them great will make any people great. The Puritans were giants in moral and intellectual strength because they lived and moved and had their being, not within the narrow circle of to-day's material and physical and perishing things, but in the atmosphere of the eternities. The signature of failure is on the life that lives for time and for material things. The life that lives for the eternal and spiritual, that sees the years of time steeped in the light of the everlasting, that looks upon material things as symbols and sacraments of spiritual verities, is always crowned. The motive that inspires any life and the purpose that controls it determine its worth in itself and its value to the world.

The Master-Teacher furnishes us with both the motive and the purpose that make life worthy and valuable. These are himself and his redemptive purpose. "For my sake" — the motive that inspires the life; "and the gospel's" — the purpose that controls the life. Paul is a splendid illustration of a life inspired by this motive and controlled by this purpose. "The love of Christ," he said, "constraineth us." "This I do," he said, "for the gospel's sake." Swayed by this motive and controlled by this purpose he lost self, ceased to be Saul, and found himself, became Paul — a name that is a synonym for all that is noble in character and grand in career.

This motive "for Christ's sake" has been the inspiration of more virtue and goodness in human character and of more heroism and unselfishness in service than any other motive that has ever swayed the human breast. "For Christ's sake" all the best stops of our nature are drawn out and there is a music in the life that never before was there.

"For Christ's sake" is the inspiration of the best service that men have rendered for their fellows and for the world's uplift. "For Christ's sake" — the Huguenots and the Covenanters and the Pilgrims live and fight and die. "For Christ's sake" — Luther and Knox and Savonarola preach. "For Christ's sake" — old Cranmer bathes his hand in the martyr fire. "For Christ's sake" — Florence Nightingale goes to the sufferers of the Crimea, and

John Howard to the prisons of England. "For Christ's sake" — David Brainerd goes to the Indians and David Livingstone to the black people of Africa. "For Christ's sake" — old men and matrons, young men and maidens, live, suffer, endure, die and kindle a blaze of light through the ages.

Christ teaches that the man swayed by this motive and controlled by this purpose will lose, sacrifice and hate much that the world calls life, but in doing so will find what God and the immortals call life. This is the divine paradox, life is found in its losing. The seed perishes that it may live in the harvest and in losing its life finds it. The oak falls to the earth at the strokes of the woodman's ax and under the touch of saw and plane and hammer is fashioned into the timber that serves man's interests and well-being. In losing its life as a tree the oak finds its life in usefulness to men.

Christ is the supreme illustration of his teaching. From one point of view Christ's life was an entire and absolute failure. Beecher well says that if you measure Christ's life "by the objects which men ordinarily seek as the chief good, or by the gratification of those faculties which carry in them among men the principal motives of human life, or by the productiveness of those powers which he gave evidence of possessing, you are compelled to conclude that he lost the end of life. He did not get the things that men think to be of most value. He

secured no wealth — not even enough to redeem himself from dependence. He had not 'where to lay his head.'" No one will doubt that he had power and sagacity enough to secure wealth. But he never tried to secure it. He did not deride this in others, but he walked in its midst almost unconscious of its presence and wholly insensible to the want of it.

Christ did not derive gratification from those faculties that men live to gratify. No one will doubt that he had the intellectual and moral power to secure the mastership in the political, literary and religious world. But he never tried to secure it. He never entered the political realm and he never came into contact with its ruling spirits, except to stand before them to be judged and condemned. He did not take a place among the men of letters of his day, nor did he enter any philosophical circle. Even in religious circles he did not seek to rule. It is impossible to think of any life endowed with such capacities that, measured by earthly standards, was so utterly thrown away. From the world's point of view his life was lost. It amassed no wealth. It did not put up or put down a single ruler. It did not overthrow one altar. This is the external view. But what of the other view? He declares: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Christ did lose his life. Did he by losing it save it? Let the ages answer.

This is the word of authority on making the most of life — lose it to find it! sacrifice it to save it! die to live!

This losing one's life means self-denial. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." Jesus did not say, "Let him practice self-denial," but, "Let him deny himself." Self-denial may be cheap and easy, may be little else than a phase of selfishness. It frequently is such when we understand self-denial to mean merely the denial of things to self. The difference between denying self and denying things to self is infinite, the contrast is as wide as the world. A man may deny things to himself through his whole life, and yet never deny himself. To deny self means that neither the wish, nor desire, nor call of the self-life is to be considered for a moment, save as it is yielded to the will of God. The denial of self means the adjustment of the life to the essential and the eternal. It is articulation, the putting into joint of that which was out of joint, the harmonizing of the spirit with the eternal Spirit, the bringing of the life into obedience to Christ.

This losing one's life means the giving up of anything that God asks us to surrender. It may seem to us to be a sacrifice, but if God asks us to make any sacrifice he will abundantly reward us. It is a sacrifice for Abram to leave his home and friends. But if Abram is to become the "father of the faithful" he must leave his father's tent and go forth, a

pilgrim into a strange land. But by losing the Ur life he found the Canaan life. It is a sacrifice for Moses to forsake Egypt. But if Moses is to become the lawgiver and leader of Israel he must leave Pharaoh's palace and its luxuries. But by losing the Egyptian life he found the leadership life. It is a sacrifice for Elisha to leave his pastoral life. But if Elisha is to succeed the prophet of Horeb he must leave the quiet fields and the congenial tasks of his father's farm. But in losing the farmer's life he found the prophet's life. As Jesus passed by he called to men that were absorbed in their daily work, "Follow me!" Peter and Andrew and John loved the sea and their boats. But Christ had a higher service for them, and by losing their life as fishermen they found it again as disciples. To-day we are absorbed in our daily affairs; our lives are spent in working, eating and sleeping, in the ten thousand details of our mortal day. The voice of the Master breaks in upon our lot, "Arise, follow me." A new motive, "for his sake," inspires us; a new purpose, "for the gospel's sake," controls us. We are delivered from the thraldom of the insignificant. We are freed from the meshes of the commonplace. The soul's pace is set to heavenly measures. We live. Our work, whatever it is, assumes a new aspect. It has a place and a part in the divine economy. We are following him and our life in him has come to its best.

This losing one's life means the doing of duty

without any reference to its immediate results. Ignatius, cast into the arena to a fierce Numidian lion, exclaimed: "I am a grain of God, let me be ground beneath the teeth of lions if I may thus become bread to feed God's people." And so he died, but in losing his life he found it. The martyr's death and devotion inspired similar faith and devotion and the one life of Ignatius was reproduced in a hundred more.

Some thought that Harriet Newell's beautiful life was wasted when she gave it to missions and then died and was buried far away from home — a bride, mother, missionary, saint, all in one brief year, and without telling a single heathen the story of her Saviour. But in losing her life Harriet Newell found it. Wherever her story of consecration has been told the hearts of gentle women and of strong men have been thrilled into missionary passion.

The woman that gave her two mites — all that she had — has ever since been a factor in the race. Sir John Kelynge — I doubt if any of you recognize the name — the brutal justice that thrust John Bunyan into Bedford Jail for twelve years — is dead: John Bunyan lives. In losing his life in the dungeon John Bunyan found it in the "Pilgrim's Progress." "Give yourself" is the message that comes to us across the ages from Calvary; "give yourself to the duty that is before you and you shall find yourself."

This losing one's life means the doing of all things

for the glory of God. Loss of life with a wrong motive is moral suicide. Loss of life for Christ's sake and the gospel's is the crowning glory of human achievement. The man that seeks supremely the glory of God must surely attain his own. He that loses sight of self-advancement and self-interest in a sublime passion for the Father's glory is by that very passion refined, transfigured, transformed, until he finds himself sharing the very glory which he sought to promote.

O that we might realize the majesty and the power of Christ's secret of living! Material things are essentially brittle and perishable. Spiritual things — love, truth, honor, heaven, God — are essentially true and abiding. Live in these things, for these things, by these things, and you shall live; live forever in God's house of many mansions, where

> "— doubtless unto thee is given
> A life that bears immortal fruit
> In such great offices as suit
> The full-grown energies of heaven."

XII

CONCERNING CAUTION

JESUS on many occasions prefaced his address to his disciples with the words, "Take heed." This caution is given in at least ten subjects on which he spoke. He used three Greek words, but each is translated "Take heed." Each word has the same primary meaning, but each is capable of a different shading, and Jesus uses the words with the finest delicacy of meaning and the most precise application.

Where he prefaces his address with the words, "Take heed," the utterance expresses a caution, but implies a compliment. The compliment is wrapped up in the thought that those to whom Christ speaks are worthy of being protected from the insidious casuistry of false teachers, and that, when put on their guard, they will be wise and strong enough to protect themselves.

Few things in the study of Christ's life arrest us more than his appreciation of men and women. He knew what was in man. He looked into the secret soul. He saw the latent possibilities of each life. He had the art of seeing the best in every

life, and because he saw the best, he had confidence in people, cherished them and relied upon them. He knew that they would be able to meet the crises as they came. His warning against the antagonists and antagonisms that they would meet, and his caution against certain qualities in their own being were complimentary to them, in that it expressed his confidence in their ability successfully to meet any exigency or overcome the mastery of any habit.

It is suggestive that the caution was always addressed to his own disciples. But in the messages that he addressed to his immediate disciples are principles that apply with equal relevancy and force to any that accept him as Lord and Master. It is reasonable to assume that the matters about which Jesus cautioned his disciples are of vital concern, otherwise he would not have given such earnest counsel and warning. Of these warnings four are discussed in this chapter, and they are selected on account of their application to the manner of life that Christ enjoins upon his followers.

1. Confidence in the Presence of Persecution. Christ cautions his disciples concerning the opposition and persecution to which his followers would be subjected. This is Mark's record: "Take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them." Luke records the utterance in practically the same words.

The caution was given in connection with Christ's prophetic discourse concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and his Second Advent. He spoke of the strife and turmoil and suffering that should mark the events and warned his disciples that the distracted people would turn on them as being in some way responsible.

But this was not the only time that Jesus gave a like caution to his disciples. When he sent them forth as his heralds, he said to them, "Beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles." In John there is the record of another such caution given to the disciples when he warned them that they would be "put . . . out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

Thus at different times and under different circumstances Jesus told his disciples of the enmity they should awaken, and of the opposition they should encounter. He cautioned them to "take heed." The Greek word that he used is the word *blepo*. Its primary meaning is "to see," and its secondary meaning, "to weigh carefully." Christ told his followers what they might expect and then cautioned them "to weigh carefully" the whole situation, so that when their trials came they would not be taken by surprise, but should be able to keep

their heads cool and their hearts brave in the perilous situation. It deepens our admiration of Jesus to find him so dealing with his followers. He did not hide from them the hardships through which they must pass.

When Drake and the captains of Queen Elizabeth's time went out into the streets of Plymouth to get sailors, they told these sailors frankly of the storms of the Pacific and of the fevers of Panama. They honored their Devonshire comrades too much to get them to sign under any false pretense. But they also pointed to the Spanish gold and treasure, the glory of the expedition, and all England ringing with their praise; and the men of Elizabeth's chivalric and adventurous times enlisted for the voyage. But Jesus told the men enlisting under him that they would live and labor in the midst of foes, that they would be illtreated publicly and that they would suffer hatred and opposition from their own families. "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." He left nothing out of the program of opposition and trial. Unlike Admiral Drake he had no worldly reward to offer them, only the guardianship of God, and the glory of God's grace, and heaven at the last. And the men to whom he spoke, with the full knowledge of all that was before them, took up their cross and followed him.

We bow in reverent subjection to a Leader so open, so frank, so sincere. And as we bow before him we pay tribute to the courage and conviction and loyalty of his first followers. I fear that we do not give enough credit to these first disciples of our Lord. They were not drafted into the service; they volunteered, and they did so under no pressing urgency. We shall never understand the courage of these men and women, this glorious company of martyrs, until we appreciate something of the conditions under which they faced every difficulty, weighed every cross, looked with open-eyed clearness into the future, and then took their place under the standard of Jesus. All hail to the first followers of Christ!

Equally frank and faithful is Jesus to all that in after ages should become his followers. He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." This condition of discipleship must be read in the light of Christ's explanation of the necessity for his own death. He had been showing his disciples "that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Peter had resisted this statement, saying, "This shall not be unto thee," but was sharply reproved for the suggestion that death might be escaped by the Lord. It was after announcement of his death that Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny

himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." It is because Christ bore the cross for us that we are competent to become cross-bearers. "Jesus' first word is not an appeal that men should do something for him, but that they should permit him to do something great for them." Till we allow him to serve us, with the unspeakable service of giving his life a ransom for us, we are incapable of understanding the redeeming power of Christ. But, saved ourselves, we are to go forth as messengers of salvation to others. That ministry is fundamentally sacrificial. The cross in the life of the Christian means service for others at the cost even of sacrifice and suffering. Jesus does not promise any roseate career to those that follow him. He clearly teaches that there must be denials, sacrifices, loss of much that the world values.

2. Carefulness in the Matter of Self-Control. Christ cautions his disciples against personal indulgences. They would have foes outside themselves, but they would have foes within, against whom they should be on their guard. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." It is another Greek word that is translated "take heed." The word is *prosecho*. Its primary meaning is "to attend to," and its secondary meaning, "to guard oneself."

Jesus names two things against which the dis-

ciples must be on guard. "Lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness." The word translated "surfeiting" occurs in the New Testament in this verse only. Its literal meaning is "headache," or "giddiness," or "stupidity" caused by drinking wine to excess. The utterance is a caution against any self-indulgence that would dull the senses to any impending event. The blind, hungry passions, tastes, desires that are rooted in the flesh and constantly demanding gratification must be held in control. The fact that Christ cautions his disciples against such a sin as this points out a subtle danger that lurks in all flesh. Everyone must be on guard, lest perchance he may be overtaken in any indulgence of the flesh, any indulgence that dulls the spirit, deadens the brain, or dims the vision.

Paul, in the epistle to the Colossians, urges with the strongest possible persuasion that we "mortify," or "put to death" the deeds of the body, that we "put to death" our "members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness." This is an ugly list, but it enumerates evils that lurk in the flesh until Christ has been formed in the life. Men obtain forgiveness and eternal life as a gift for which the only requisite is faith, but they achieve holiness only through patient, believing effort in coöperation with the Holy Spirit.

With equal emphasis Jesus cautioned his dis-

ciples to be on their guard against the "cares of this life." The spiritual vision and power of more Christians is destroyed by anxiety concerning the "cares of this life" than by the gross sensuality just referred to. We are horrified at the thought of any disciple being "overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness." It is such a bestial, revolting, sewerlike sin that we recoil from it. But silken cords may bind as tightly and as securely as iron chains. The soul may be dulled and the vision dimmed by the "cares of this world" as readily as by gross indulgences. Christ mentions two extremes — the extreme of coarse indulgence, and the extreme of refined concern — drunkenness and anxiety — and he cautions the disciples against both; for both are equally fatal to spiritual power and alertness. It is a tremendous caveat against absorption in the things of the world. A man may be drunk with wine and so become insensible to spiritual conditions, or he may be so filled with anxiety about this life as to be insensible to the realities of the spiritual world.

This twofold caution of Christ is urged lest by fleshly indulgence or mental anxiety the day of his appearing come upon us unawares. The coming of our Lord is in all the ages the most momentous event. It should occupy a large place in our thoughts. He may not come in our time, but we should keep our eyes lifted to the heavens, be ever looking for his appearing.

3. Reality in Matters of Faith and Experience. "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matt. 16:6. In his record of this utterance Mark adds "the leaven of Herod," and omits the word "Sadducees." "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod." Mark 8:15. Some think that Mark named Herod as an outstanding Sadducee; and that idea may be correct, but Herod stood for a distinct type of character, and the caution of Christ may have a threefold application.

The Greek word translated "take heed," in these two passages, is a different word from the two words used in the other cautions. The word is *horao*. Its primary meaning, like that of the word *blepo*, is "to see." Both words denote the physical act of seeing, but the word *horao* gives prominence to the discerning mind, to the seeing or perception that results principally from vision. It does not so much denote sight as seeing. Sight is a faculty, seeing is an art. Jesus selected his words carefully. "Take heed" — that is exercise discernment, discrimination. It is illuminative to see how Christ used words. "Take heed," that is "weigh carefully" entrance upon a life of service in view of the opposition that would be encountered. "Take heed," that is "be on guard" against insidious indulgences that would unfit for service. "Take heed," that is "discern," "discriminate," in the presence of the subtleties of thought and teaching

that abound. The added word, "beware," gives emphasis to this last caution. "Take heed, beware." It is an earnest admonition to look out for a phenomenon of very sinister import.

Leaven is a figure for something that works secretly and by way of infection. It is a spirit, a genius, an atmosphere, a temper, a *zeitgeist*, insinuating itself everywhere. From it Jesus shrank in horror, and against it he warned his disciples. One that is inoculated with this leaven, that has taken into his spiritual nature the virus of this temper, is unfitted for any attainment or achievement. This spirit finds its expression in three types — Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians. These types, antagonistic at many points of belief and practice, were at one in their disregard of righteousness and of sincerity in religion.

The Pharisees were the most conspicuous of the three types in the time of Christ, and their characteristics are given in detail in the Gospel narrative. The Sadducees and Herodians do not so frequently appear in the Gospel narrative, but enough is written of them to indicate their general character.

The Pharisees represent the self-complacent people who are satisfied with their virtues, and who pride themselves on their observances of the ritualism of religion. They are proud and boastful. Pharisaism represents hypocrisy. The Sadducees were the religious aristocracy in Jerusalem. They were concerned specially with the material interests

of religious institutions and services; the spirit of the Sadducees had a tendency to secularize religion. They questioned the authority of revelation, derided a spiritual religion and denied the immortality of the soul. The Sadducean spirit is essentially skeptical. The Herodians were the so-called practical class, who acknowledged religion but lived worldly lives. They represent worldliness. In warning us against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees and Herodians Christ counsels against any manner of life, or any teaching, or any practices that do not strike the note of reality, or that foster doubt, or that indorse the secular, worldly spirit.

Pharisee, Sadducee, Herodian are words that no longer distinguish class among us. But when the classes that they once defined are known, their existence will be recognized among us, though distinguished by other names.

The Pharisee is still among us, not perhaps of the old type, but the same in reality; the man who is not what he professes to be, who preaches what he does not practice, whose words are better than his works, who is punctilious about details and careless about the larger conceptions of life and duty. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." It is what we are that counts, not what we seem to be or what we say. Emerson is credited with the saying, "What you are speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." Whether Emerson said that or

not, it is what the world says. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," the insincere, double-faced attitude of life. It is easily developed. One has said that the word "chant" had to part with only one letter before it became "cant," and "piety" adds but two letters to become "pietism." "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees."

The Sadducee is still among us. He is a skeptic, but his skepticism is not that of the thoughtfulness of the philosopher, nor that of the perplexity of the serious student. It is scoffing indifference to the spiritual because his life is given over to the frivolous and to the earthly. He is suave, and smooth and genial, but skeptical and scoffing and always subtle.

One may not accept the story of Eden — of course that will not affect the fact — but the Edenic serpent is still alive. The great poet of Germany, in his immortal tragedy, "Faust," pictures Mephistopheles as the master of consummate subtlety. He was always changing, always compliant. To Margaret he was one thing, and to Faust another. He is exquisitely accommodating everywhere, but always creating doubt in regard to goodness and always seeking his own dominance.

He has representatives and agents on earth. Bunyan introduces us to people who are not mere fiction, but who live among us — My Lord Turn-About, My Lord Fair-Speech, Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, Mr. Smooth-Man and the Rev. Dr. Two-

Tongues. Bunyan tells us that the one thing on which these gentleman agree and about which they are most zealous is that religion should go in silver slippers. Their one appeal is that we should have no regard for doctrine or creed, and that we should not be overthoughtful about truth. Such things are outdated in this age. There is nothing in them. Just get along through life the easiest way you can. All this is "the leaven . . . of the Sadducees," and it is the snare of many lives.

I borrow an illustration from Mr. R. E. Welsh. "Of what religion are you, Mr. Rogers?" a woman asked the banker patron of literature.

"Of what religion? I am of the religion of all sensible men."

"And what religion is that?" the woman asked.

"All sensible men, madam, keep that to themselves."

Mr. Welsh tells us that the same incident is introduced by D'Israeli in his "Endymion," but that it is older than either Rogers or D'Israeli, being quoted by Speaker Onslow as the saying of the first Lord Shaftesbury, who was a deist.

Mr. Welsh asks: "Was he indulging in a mere verbal quip? Or was it a piece of nimble fencing, a neat way of warding off" an embarrassing question? We need not pass judgment. The spirit revealed in the incident is a spirit all too conspicuous in our times. It represents the attitude of certain people who cherish no sacred faiths, who are controlled

by no heart-tinctured beliefs. Any religion is good enough, Mohammedanism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity — all are alike good. That is very broad. Yes, but it is very vague and emasculated. It does not touch bottom. It gives the soul no anchorage. It is thoroughly Sadducean in spirit.

Conviction is power. Conviction is the nitric acid that turns the glycerin into dynamite. The men and women who find the finest inspiration, the sweetest comfort, the fullest help in their religion; the people who live the best lives and do the most good, are those who have clear, confident convictions. One does not have to solve all problems or understand all mysteries before he can take hold by faith on God and the eternal verities, and rest forever in Christ Jesus. Tennyson teaches that.

I found him not in world or sun,
Or eagle wing, or insect eye,
Nor through the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs that are spun.

But Tennyson found him and he tells us how:

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we that have not seen thy face
By faith and faith alone embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

I like very much the lines of Principal Shairp:

I have a life with Christ to live,
But, ere I live it, must I wait
Till learning can clear answer give
Of this and that book's date?

CONCERNING CAUTION

I have a life in Christ to live,
I have a death in Christ to die;
And must I wait till science give
All doubts a full reply?

Nay, rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about,
Questioning of life and death and sin,
Let me but creep within

Thy fold, O Christ, and at thy feet
Take but the lowest seat,
And hear thine awful voice repeat,
In gentlest accents, heavenly sweet:
"Come unto me, and rest;
Believe me, and be blest."

The Herodians are still with us. They are many in number. They show in bulk in our day, as the Pharisee did in Christ's day. Worldly people are in the majority. Their very numerical strength creates an atmosphere, an infected atmosphere, that is dangerous to spiritual life. "Take heed, beware . . . of the leaven of Herod."

These cautions of Jesus are a grave reminder that it is possible for Christians to become insincere, skeptical, worldly. We must guard against these tendencies, and above all against the spirit that makes them possible. We may not be in danger of bald hypocrisy, but it is Pharisaical to profess more than we possess. We may not positively deny God or his truth, but it is Sadducee-like to be cynical. We may not give ourselves up to worldliness, but it is possible to avoid worldly things and be worldly in spirit. Christ's caution is a protest

against mere religious outwardness, and it is a plea for reality, sincerity, genuineness.

4. The Cultivation of a Spirit of Generosity. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Christ illustrates this utterance by the parable of a certain rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully. There is no dishonesty charged: there is no financial finesse suggested. The point emphasized is that the man's chief thought was to treasure up all he had for himself. If existing barns were insufficient, he would build larger, and he would tell his soul of the things that were laid up for many years. There was not a thought of stewardship, not an idea of sharing his plenty with the poor. It was simply hard and harsh selfishness, greater barns.

Covetousness is the greed of having, not of getting. It is the satisfaction of having. Against this delusion and illusion Jesus warns us. "Take heed," *horao*, exercise your discernment, your finer judgment, and you will know that a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Life, true life, finds its satisfaction, not in many possessions, but in much appreciation. So say the life stories of the immortals. John and Peter and Paul lived far from luxury. Thoreau lived in his log cabin by Walden Pond on forty dollars a year. Wordsworth and Coleridge

and Keats "dwelt midway between poverty and riches." Our own Hawthorne and Longfellow and Whittier were "content with small means." It is possible to be wealthy though not rich. Life consists in seeing, hearing, feeling. The man of the open spirit and the sensitive thought and the responsive heart is the man whose life has a wealthy content. A man's worth is not to be estimated by what he has, but by what he is. We believe that, but we do not practice it. So saturated are we with the notion that a man's worth and success are indicated by his possessions and position that if I were to ask almost anyone, "What is Mr. So-and-So worth?" he would instantly begin to think of his banker, of his possessions. It would naturally be supposed that I wanted to know how much money he had. Christ contradicts that idea and teaches that a man's worth depends upon what he is. It is not the quantity of a man's possessions, but the quality of his personality that determines his worth. Christ had few possessions, but he lived the human life at its fullest and richest measure of expression.

The measure of manhood in Christ challenges us to seek its realization in ourselves. And that is possible to everyone as Christ is formed in him. Christ is man's supreme need. Not some new scheme of living, not some change of environment, not some new ideal; just the touch of the pierced hand, just the incoming of the Spirit of Christ; and then

a manhood vigorous and victorious, for it is a manhood in Jesus and a manhood that, at the day dawn, will be changed into his radiant likeness, as "the moonbeams that touch the dark ocean, transfigure its waves into a silver radiance like their own."

XIII

CONCERNING CHILDHOOD

AMONG the many exquisite utterances of Christ concerning childhood this stands preëminent: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

The incident that called forth these words, and the words themselves, are so familiar that one may easily miss their profound significance. The incident in itself is very simple. Some mothers, carrying their infants in their arms, and others leading their little ones by the hand, came to Christ that he might bless their children. To record such an incident seems almost trivial. But the Spirit of God considered it sufficiently important to have it recorded in three of the Gospel narratives. And when we study the incident in its historical perspective, in the light of the attitude of that age toward childhood, we shall understand the reason for this emphasis. It is one of the really memorable events of earth's history, one of the truly great scenes of all times.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me." It

is a disclosure of Christ's estimate of the value of childhood. Christ's age and the ages before Christ did not appreciate the child life. These ages placed value upon physical strength and endurance, and put emphasis upon deeds of daring, upon prowess in sports, and upon bravery in battle. It was customary in Sparta, and even in some of the Roman possessions, to destroy small and feeble children who did not give promise of growing up into sturdy manhood and womanhood. In nearly every community weak and defective children were utterly neglected, and their death was welcomed.

Even such good and progressive men as Christ's disciples — and they were far in advance of their times, else they would not have followed Jesus — had no special regard for children, nor any real appreciation of the child's value and importance. These disciples showed such disregard when, with as little regard for the feelings of the mothers as for the rights of the children, they rebuked those who brought the little ones to Jesus. This greatly displeased Jesus. He reproved the disciples, while he encouraged the mothers of Salem to come with their babies, and then he uttered the immortal sentence that has rung down through the centuries: "Suffer the little children to come unto me." That utterance is the charter of childhood's rights and of childhood's privileges.

In that age it was a startling thing for Jesus to give such consideration to children. It was so un-

usual as to be sensational. It arrested the attention of the people and awakened their interest in childhood. And it was a revelatory thing for all ages for Jesus to give such prominence to childhood. It led men to appreciate the child nature as they had never done before and in a way of which they had never thought. They transferred the accent of their interest in the child from the body, its physical fitness and its value, to the soul, to its possibilities and to its prospects. They did not depreciate the body, but they began to appreciate the soul, and to care for and to honor the body because of the soul. Before the end of the first century a Roman emperor was supporting five thousand destitute children. Soon hospitals for children were erected. Before the end of the eighth century asylums and homes for destitute children were to be found in every part of Europe, and the law provided that the children in these institutions should be taught some trade, at the public expense. All down the centuries better and ever better laws for the protection of children have been enacted, and better conditions created, and the twentieth century dawned with splendid provisions for childhood. When the history of our times comes to be written, the historian who has sensed its deepest spirit will define it as an age which recognized and emphasized the importance of childhood.

It is not sufficient to say that the attitude of Christ toward child life is abreast the spirit and teach-

ing of our age in regard to childhood. It must be said rather that Christ created that spirit and teaching. When Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," he quietly introduced into the minds of men a new thought, a seed thought from which has grown all that consideration and appreciation of child life which is one of the fine characteristics of Christendom to-day. The new attitude toward childhood is the attitude of Christ twenty centuries ago. It was because Jesus revealed to the race the value of a little child that childhood has come to its own, and that its importance is recognized.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me." It is Christ's expression of his appreciation of childhood. It is one thing to value the child, it is quite another thing to appreciate and love a child. Economists may take the child into consideration in devising their scheme of things for society, and they may estimate the child value as an asset in a nation's resources. Jesus took the children into his arms and blessed them, not only to teach the importance of childhood but because he loved little children.

A proud woman of Campania visited Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi. The women began talking, as women are wont to do, about robes and ornaments and jewels. Noticing that Cornelia was plainly dressed and wore no ornaments, her guest abruptly asked, "Where are your jewels?"

Cornelia replied that she would show them shortly, and adroitly kept the conversation to the subject. She was hedging for time when her boys should come home from school. On hearing their approach, she hastened to meet them and returned with her two boys, one on each side of her, and proudly, triumphantly said, "These are my jewels." Appreciation of children! They are better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with them. That is illustrated and proved in the conduct of Cornelia. In after life her boys, Tiberius and Caius, met every expectation. They took their place among the best men of the nation, and they crowned their mother with the finest honor that manhood can confer upon motherhood — they were the kind of men their mother wanted them to be.

From a New York daily paper I clipped these lines:

While walking through a crowded down-town street the other day,
I heard a little urchin to his comrade turn and say:
"Say, Jimmy, let me tell youse, I'd be happy as a clam
If I only was de feller dat me mudder tinks I am.

"Say, Jim, she tinks dat I'm a wonder, and she knows her little lad
Could never mix wid nothin' dat was ugly, mean or bad,
Lots er times I sits and tinks how nice 'twould be for him and his
If a feller only was de feller dat his mudder tinks he is!"

My friends, be yours a life of toil or undiluted joy,
You still can learn a lesson from this small, unlettered boy,
Don't aim to be an earthly saint with your eyes fixed on a star;
Just try to be the fellow that your mother thinks you are.

These lines may offend good taste. They may not commend themselves to us as poetry. The grammar is not correct. The language is neither elegant nor elevated. The art of Coleridge, or of Tennyson, of Bryant, or of Longfellow, may have been a sealed book to the anonymous writer of these lines; but so has it been to many whose music in poetry has sung love and sweetness into human life. My friend and neighbor, Will Carleton, who passed a little while ago the border line of the unseen, was a poet, though Kipling acknowledged him not, and of him the literary cult was ignorant. There was none of Milton's "keen, translucent music" in him. He had none of Byron's "tempest anger, tempest mirth." "The wizard twilight Coleridge knew" was unknown to him. He lacked Shelley's "flush of rose on peaks divine." But despite this, many thousands have laughed and wept, and all have been brightened and bettered by his "Over the Hills to the Poorhouse"; his "Betsy and I Are Out"; and his "Out of the Old House, Nancy." What touches the heart and makes men and women feel, what evokes a smile or a teardrop, what awakens human sympathy from torpor and exalts human kindliness to its proper place, that is poetry. That is why Will Carleton was a genuine poet — he touched the heartstrings and made them vibrate. That is why I give place to the clipping from the New York daily. The lines strike deep into the roots of our being and make us feel and think and

wish. Their sentiment is worthy of the best poet. Man's highest tribute to his mother is in being what she thinks he is or wishes him to be. That was the tribute of the Gracchi to their mother. They died in early manhood, and Cornelia was comforted in the fact that the tears of a mourning nation mingled with her own as they fell on the graves of her boys. When Cornelia died the Roman senators erected a magnificent statue to her honor, and placed on it the inscription: "To Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi." It was appreciation of the mother, but it was appreciation as well of the mother's boys. Exalt them, and they will bring thee to honor. A thousand times in history have mothers been honored for their splendid gifts to the race — sons and daughters of worth. Such sons and such daughters are the outgrowth of that love and appreciation that cherishes the little ones.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me." It is Christ's appeal for childhood's defense and protection. Christ had much to say about this, and some of these sayings are among the most trenchant of his utterances. This is one, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." I like to keep whispering this text within my heart. It teaches me how I can keep in close touch with Christ. He identifies himself with childhood — with each separate little one. Receiving them, we receive him; rejecting them, we reject him. It is

a very gracious word, but a word most searching. It shows us that Christ puts himself into relationship with childhood, and that any failure on our part to defend or protect a little child offends him.

Another of Christ's utterances on the protection of childhood is this: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." There was a belief among the Jews of Christ's day that every adult person had a guardian angel, but there was also the belief that little children had no such angels. Jesus corrected their notion. He said that the little children have guardian angels, and, further, that their guardian angels do always behold the face of his Father who is in heaven. To be in a position to behold the king's face was, in the East, to be in the first place of honor. Jesus says that the children's angels have the place of honor in heaven; they always behold the face of the Father. A commentator of the olden time says, "The fundamental idea is that the highest angels of God in heaven represent the smallest subjects of his kingdom on earth." Since children are so honored in heaven, they must not be despised on earth.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me." This is Christ's assertion of the intimate relationship of little children to himself. Jesus did not say "permit these people to bring their children

to me," but "suffer the little children to come unto me." It is not forcing the words "to come" to find in them Christ's intimation that it is the instinct and tendency of childhood to come to him. Between Christ and childhood there is an affinity, an intimate and constitutional correspondence. This does not mean that any child escapes the need of Christ's regenerating grace. But that regenerating grace may operate in infancy. If we may not say that the normal, yet we may say that the ideal, Christian life is the life in which the progress of faith and love are like the dawning of the morning or the opening of the petals of the flower to the sunshine, so gradual in its on-coming that we can hardly tell when it begins or what are its stages of development. Christian biography is rich with the records of those who so grew up in the knowledge and love of God that neither they themselves nor those about them could tell when they entered upon the path of life.

A lad of fourteen who was being examined for church membership, was asked, "How long have you felt as you now describe?" "All my life," was the prompt and open-hearted answer.

A minister was examining a little girl who appeared before the session to be received into the Church, and he asked her, "When did you begin to have these experiences?" "I never began to have them," was the naïve answer. "I have had them always."

One can imagine the thrill of joy that swept through that minister's heart, for the little girl was his own child.

The children are in touch with Christ. They have an innate consciousness of God, a genuine love of the Saviour, and a deep sense of fellowship with him. If we would have our children become life-long servants of God, we should begin in the earliest years to cultivate their friendship with Christ, and to teach them the elemental truths about God and their relations to him. We must do this with discrimination, adapting the teaching to the capacity of the child. But we must be fearlessly truthful in our teaching. It must be absolutely true. One should not learn anything in childhood that he will have to unlearn in manhood. First impressions are lasting, "they bite deep into the mind, and are almost ineffaceable." Train children from the cradle, keep them through all the years in love with God, with the people of God, and with the things of God, and in these they will forever abide. If, in their infant hours and childhood days, we let our children feel the warmth and glow of Christ's love, we shall almost infallibly mortgage their future to Christ and Christian character.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me." It is Christ's appeal for a Christian atmosphere and a Christian example for the children. The home atmosphere should be such as will make possible the religious culture of the children. We talk about

being "true to the kindred points of home and heaven." But is this poetry only? Is there any vital relationship between our home and heaven? Is the Word of God an open book in our home? Is prayer heard there? If so, our children will grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Children have a right to godly example. This is more potent than teaching. Little children will like what their parents like, appreciate what their parents appreciate, do what their parents do. The girl's ideal is her mother. The boy's model is his father. Example counts. When Paul wrote to Timothy about the forces that made him, he referred to his faith "which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice." Example, instruction, atmosphere. John Randolph said, "I should have been an atheist if it had not been for one recollection, and that was that my mother used to take my hands in hers and cause me on my knees to say, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'"

Take care of the children. Love them into the love of God. Guide them into the goodness of life. Pray them into the privileges of grace. Fit them for fruitfulness in the kingdom. Lead them on and up to the gateway of heaven. When the journey is over, and the hill is climbed, and we look back out of the cloudless dawn, I think we shall find that the finest service that we have rendered on this earth was when we brought our children to Christ that he

might take and keep them in his arms, and I think that, when we awake in the eternal morning of the Lord, we shall have no higher joy than that which will come to us in the saying, "Father, here am I and the children that thou gavest me."

XIV

CONCERNING THE "LITTLE ONES"

CHRIST applied the term "little ones" to children, and also to those who, because of their immaturity, their weakness, their ignorance, might be called children — the dependent and defenseless folk of society. In applying the term to such classes Jesus said, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." That is strong language. It is most startling. And it was spoken by One that was not given to exaggeration. The Revised Version reads, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea." The meaning in each rendering is the same. To "offend" a little one, or "cause it to stumble" by placing some obstacle in its pathway Godward, so that it shall trip and fall over it into evil ways, is so hateful, so diabolical a thing, that the severest punishment is too little for the person that does it.

The figure of speech used to indicate the extent and severity of the punishment is one of the most weird and awful of the Bible metaphors. We shudder at the thought of the "millstone" and the casting into the sea, but such is Christ's illustration of the hopeless destruction of any who shall offend his little ones. It is a tremendous appeal for the safeguarding and the protecting of the child life.

I should like to write this warning over the entrance of every motion-picture show, every theater, every saloon, every sweatshop, that men might know how perilous a thing it is to cause a child to stumble. And I should like to write the message in letters of shimmering light over the doorways of our homes, our schools, our colleges, our Sabbath schools and our churches, that parents, teachers, Sabbath-school workers and ministers might learn to appreciate more deeply their high calling in the training of children.

We must not "despise" — that is — think down, think little of, or ignore the child. It is to despise the "little ones" when we are impatient with their words and ways, when we say or do unseemly things in their presence, when we neglect to train them in spiritual and eternal things. It is an awful despising of the child, when we train it in the love of the world, and not in the love of God. From one of my Sabbath-school teachers I learned this incident: "We have missed you from Sabbath school for some time," said the teacher to a little lass of twelve years of

age. "Well," said she, "father thinks that a ride in the machine in the pure air would be better than an hour spent in the musty air of the Sabbath-school room." Now, in the first place, the air in that Sabbath-school room is not "musty" and, in the second place, the child's supreme need on a Sabbath afternoon was not "air," either "pure" or "musty." It was not "the musty air" in the Sabbath-school room — so largely a fiction — that was the controlling thought of the father, but it was the pleasure of motoring. The motor against the Sabbath school, pleasure against religion, the physical against the spiritual — "take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones."

It is to despise the child when the more advanced believers think the child incompetent to enter into covenant with God. I baptized a wee child, just five months and three days old. As I approached her she greeted me with a winsome smile, as I stepped forward to administer the water and pronounce the name "Anna," there was such a look of gracious sweetness on her face that I felt I was very near the heavenly. The little one was in touch with God. So are all the "little ones." Ian MacLaren calls faith the sixth sense. The suggestion is admirable. It is our habit to think of faith as an exercise simply or, possibly, the fruit of some faculty. Ian MacLaren's word suggests that it is a faculty in and of itself. It is specially conspicuous in the child life. It is innate and constitutional, as much a part of

the child's being as any physical organ or any mental activity. No argument is necessary to prove this. In its manifestations in childhood it proves itself. This faith, this subconscious, this spiritual sense of the divine, is not something that is given to us or something that is secured by us. It is a part of ourselves. It is coeval with our birth, and when recognized and cultivated it will grow with our growth.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones"; for it is in early life that the basis and lines of character are determined and formed. The head master of the University College School of England was asked what he considered the secret of successful training, and he answered, "Beginning soon enough, and not letting Satan get the advantage of us at the start." And then this teacher of teachers says: "I have had fourteen years of experience in dealing with boys. I was ten years tutor to the town boys at Rugby. I was four years in a London day school. I cannot give statistics for what I say, but my knowledge of boy life will give some credence to my statement that an appalling number, I ought almost to say the majority, of children, who become morally ruined, are ruined for the formation of character before they are five years old."

Let us hold the children for Christ and his Church. The early years are the best. Fatigue dwells in the afternoon shade. Give us the children, for childhood is in touch with God, and is called of God.

The Church cannot err in receiving into her arms those whom the Saviour embraced in his own. The Church cannot blunder in receiving into her membership those that, called through the gates of death, would be welcomed in heaven. Do not fear that they will not continue steadfast. "After forty years' experience in the pastorate," wrote Dr. William M. Taylor, "I deliberately affirm that the stability of those who enter the ranks of church membership in early years is vastly greater than that of those who make their confession in maturer years."

Never think that the children cannot enter into covenant relations with our God. I believe the covenant relationship exists already. The value of the child in the thought of God is revealed in the words: "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." This is a promise to hold and to cherish. While your children live, their angels ever behold God's face; when they die, God takes them to himself: for it is his will that not one of them should perish. A mother, from whom two children had been taken within twelve hours, said to me, as I sat with her in her shadowed home, "I keep constantly thinking of them as 'safe in the arms of Jesus.'" "He took them up in his arms." If children are held in such loving regard by the Lord Jesus Christ, they should command not only our love but our choicest thought, our most thoughtful care and our most careful culture and protection.

The term "little ones" is also applied by the Lord to the weak and the defenseless. And the same figure of speech is employed. "It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."

The spirit of contempt and disdain for the weak and the unfortunate was conspicuous in the ancient world, and traces of it are not wanting in the modern world. There is no spirit for which Jesus has more scathing words. To despise the weak or the poor or the inefficient or the sinful is not evidence of strength or of wealth or of efficiency or of holiness. In most cases it is the opposite. The genuinely strong man sympathizes with the weak, and is always ready to help them. The wealthy man is always ready to assist the poor. The efficient knows so well how rugged is the pathway to efficiency that he has regard for the one who is climbing up, and sympathy for the one who is at the bottom of the way. The man who has grown by the grace of God into a sturdy Christian life always looks upon the sinner with sincere pity and with an earnest purpose to do all that he can for his redemption.

The spirit that despises or condemns any human being is the spirit of the unworthy. It is a con-

temptible thing to contemn. It is a despicable thing to despise. It is utterly out of harmony with the spirit of Christ, who never despised or "thought down" a human being. A whole village might hold the woman of Samaria in contempt, and have nothing to do with her, but Jesus sat with her for hours, talked with her, gave her new ideals, imparted to her a new spirit, and sent her transformed and radiant back to her village. Conversion is better than contempt.

Despising, disdaining anyone, makes terrible and retributive gashes in the heart of the person who indulges such feelings, and lays a stumblingblock in the way of the person against whom the feelings are indulged. If we cannot help one upward and onward, let us not hinder him on his way by despising him. Some one has said that "there is nothing so likely to make a brother despicable as just to let him see that you despise him." And perhaps there is nothing that more surely lowers the tone of one's own life than to indulge the feeling of contempt or disdain. It is a dangerously destructive feeling, destructive alike to the person that indulges it, and to the one against whom it is indulged. There is nothing that so touches the flowers of the soul with frostbite that they crumple and die, nothing that so chills the atmosphere of the life that it becomes hard and frozen, as the manifestation of the spirit of contempt for another.

Jesus was the champion of the despised. He was

"despised and rejected of men," but he did not hold nor count it against them. He came to save them, and one of the elements that entered into the condition from which he wants to save is this feeling of disdain, contempt, despising. One's salvation is not complete until this feeling is eliminated from his being, and he finds it impossible for him to despise another. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." He loved men and women into life and beauty. Even when a poor outcast was brought before him, charged with a foul sin that she did not deny, Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." No stone was cast, the accusers slunk away, and to the woman Jesus said, "Hath no man condemned thee?" And she said, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." "Sin no more." I think it was more than counsel, more than advice: it was the divine fiat, the imparting of a power that made it possible for her to "sin no more." And so I think of the guilty woman going forth redeemed and radiant because of her contact with Jesus. That is the Christ spirit, the spirit of pity and of charity and of forgiveness, and that should be the spirit of every Christian.

"Oh, the world is full of sighs,
Full of sad and weeping eyes;
Help your fallen brother rise
While the days are going by!"

CONCERNING THE "LITTLE ONES"

Again Jesus uses the term "little ones" and this time in an appeal for ministry. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

This is an advance. Not only are we not to despise or to be indifferent to the weak and the dependent, but we are to help and to assist them. To render that help is the privilege, and within the power, of all. "A cup of cold water" — a little thing, ah, perhaps not so little as it seems! It is the obligation of kindness that Jesus is pressing; and kindness, the outflow of love, is the great thing in the world. The world rings with the praises of great benefactors, heaven's music sings the praise of those that love, and, because of love, help and bless — are kind to their fellows. In great or in little we should do for others what the passing opportunity allows us to do. Of those that went forth from Arthur's Round Table in quest of the Holy Grail, all failed save one, who came upon a stranger dying of thirst. To his lips the knight placed a cup of cold water, and, lo, in that act of kindness, the wooden vessel was transmuted into gold. The sacred chalice was in his hand!

"If any little word of mine can make a life the brighter,
If any little song of mine can make a heart the lighter,
God help me speak that little word and take my bit of singing,
And drop it in some lonely vale to set the echoes ringing."

XV

CONCERNING HEARING

OF the receptive faculties, that of hearing involves a serious responsibility, as is evident in the earnest caution that Jesus gives concerning it. "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." Luke repeats the statement in almost the same words: "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."

On other occasions Jesus warns his hearers to be on their guard while listening to their teachers. What we hear has much to do with the forming of our opinions and the fashioning of our characters. This truth needs emphasis in our age.

In the world there is the sounding of many voices, and our ears are opened to the impact of them all. Talks and conferences on varied interests with which we are identified; conversations, more or less casual,

in which we take part; lectures, addresses, sermons; the books we read, the magazines we scan; the myriad-toned voice of the press, uttering the best and more often the worst of the world's life. This is the most persistent and insistent of the world's voices. Let us take heed of what we hear from these voices, and of the relative place we give them. Has the daily press such a place in our lives and in our homes that the latest happenings and, too often, the latest sensations are read and talked about in our homes, while the Word of God is unnoticed or rarely read by ourselves or our children? Among all the voices to which we listen have we made provision for the voice that speaks of love, of purity, of redemption, of service and of heaven — the eternal Voice? "Take heed what ye hear."

There is need of caution in the hearing of exposition and of exhortations that claim to be based upon the Word of God. The voice of the Eternal is caught up and mingled with so many other voices that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the divine from the human, to disentangle the enduring truth from the passing utterance, the eternal issues from the temporary interests, the authentic utterances from the irresponsible phrases. Paul speaks of a time that shall come when people will not endure sound doctrine, "but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." I doubt

very much if any other age has had more people that sought more fads in philosophy and more fancies in religion than have the people of our age.

These fads are announced as finalities. The dogmatism of many of the modern cults, the easy flippancy with which men, still in the alphabet of God's wisdom, pronounce themselves in religious finalities, are enough to make the angels weep. Incapable, as all men are, of letting their thoughts broaden out into the sweep and scope of God's truth, yet many venture, with conspicuous immodesty, to constrain God's truth within their own thought. There are quacks in theology and they should be avoided as are men of the same type in medicine. "Take heed what ye hear." The time has come when men think themselves free to follow any teacher, especially if he is pleasing and plausible; to adopt and advocate any theory, provided it be fashionable. Men are not free to do that. They are under obligation to search the Scriptures in order to see if these things are true, and only when they find that the truth advocated is in unison with God's Word are they free to accept it.

The highways of the ages are strewn with the discarded theories, the vain philosophies, the false sciences and the man-made religions that have wrecked the minds and the hearts of such as gave credence to them. Why is it that men become daft and rave over their own imagination, or that of another, when they may come into direct and vital

touch with everlasting truth? Why is it that they will read books on religious, and more often secular, themes, and neglect to read the words that shall abide forever? It is the characteristic of the day for people, turning away from the abiding realities that alone can satisfy the soul for time and for eternity, to follow delusions that vanish at the touch of divine truth and genuine science.

No lesson of the past is more conspicuously obvious than that the broad prevalence of a new doctrine may be only an incident of the fashion of this world which passeth away. The truly thoughtful will accept no theory nor form of religion simply because it is popular or even widely believed. But there are pitiable multitudes that catch up any fad which is winsomely presented or popularly accepted. We have a singular and amazing illustration of this in an ancient fanaticism whose headquarters are in Brooklyn. Thousands of people in all parts of this country and throughout Europe have accepted — to the financial enrichment of the leader — the teaching, if it may be so called, of "Pastor" Russell, Millennial Dawnism. This singular cult teaches that the Lord returned to this earth in October, 1874. This unproved declaration of the return of our Lord is made by Mr. Russell without the least hesitation or misgiving. He says that the fact "that his presence is not known and generally recognized by the world, or even among Christians, is no argument against this truth." According to

Mr. Russell the Lord is to remain incognito on the earth for forty years, and then reveal himself. This revelation, then, is due in October, 1914. It seems almost inconceivable that people should accept such a vagary, and yet thousands have accepted it, and they have shown their faith by giving their property and their money to this same "Pastor" Russell. One continuous golden stream pours into his treasury: for his dupes say that, at the Lord's revelation, October, 1914, property will have no market value and wealth will be of no worth. What heartbreaking regrets in October, 1914! And this because the people forsook the eternal truth for a passing illusion!

Let the Word of God have a more commanding place in our lives and in our homes. Let us read it, study it, know it so well, that we shall not be caught by any plausible personality, by any philosophical platitude, by any rhetorical phrase, by any prattle of conceited ignorance. Let us lay hold of the hard, rugged, eternal truths, the truths that have molded manhood and that have made civilization; and we shall never be ensnared, never be entrapped by specious fallacies, by symphonic phrases, by glittering generalities, by unintelligible theories, that can be understood fully — as their advocates tell us — only when we have given allegiance to some vague cult or to some occult vagary. Such a proposition is an insult to ordinary intelligence. It belittles the mind; it makes man-

hood, it may be, sweet, gentle, gracious; but it makes it small, groveling and without genius.

Jesus not only said, "Take heed what ye hear"; but he also said, "Take heed therefore how ye hear." Christ had a special controversy with the Pharisees because they magnified trifles, put the emphasis of their teaching and hearing upon mint, upon anise, upon cummin, rather than upon the weightier matters of the law. They looked so much at the rushlights that they saw not the stars. In his "Spanish Story of the Armada," Mr. Froude has a suggestive line that discloses the incompetency of Philip the Second. He says, "The smallest thing and the largest seemed to occupy him equally." He had lost the perspective, the sense of relative importance, the estimate of values. Great is it to know a trifle when you meet it, to distinguish between the rule and the law, the precept and the principle. Great is it to see and to appreciate the ultimate truth and to obey it. The power to discriminate the big and the little is the conspicuous index of the great mind, the secret of a conquering life.

In one of his great parables—they were all great—Jesus speaks of three kinds of ground upon which the seed of divine truth may fall without any result.

The hard ground. Many a man leaves, like a public highway, the avenues of his intellectual life open, keeping no watch, making no challenge. All sorts of notions and all sorts of theories and of so-called philosophies and sciences have the right of

way, until, without realizing it, the avenues of his mind are trampled into impenetrability, as hard as a macadam road. Good ground! But too hard for any growth.

The shallow ground. Many there are that give an easy and an amiable responsiveness to any message, from theosophy to Russellism, without a real receptivity. A man may be clever, and he may talk glibly about his new thought; but he may be without depth, and he cannot talk profoundly about truth and its correspondence. Good ground, but too shallow for rooting!

The thorny ground. The interests of men so multiply, and their attention to these becomes so absorbing, that, insensibly, life grows chaotic in its very exuberance, it becomes poverty-stricken in its very fullness; there is too much of preoccupation to allow of any harvest, save, indeed, the harvest of weeds that grow the quickest. Good ground! But too much choked with common things to yield a harvest of things worth while!

There is in the intellectual life a law of equivalents. Here is Christ's declaration of it: "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." All this is said about the hearing of truth. A man may not remain stationary in his intellectual life, nor in his spiritual

life, any more than he may remain stationary in his physical life. It is written of Jesus, that he grew in stature, in wisdom, and in favor with God and man. We are growing intellectually and spiritually, or we are retrogressing and degenerating.

A deliberate refusal to give the seed — the Word of God — a chance is not necessary. The mere neglect of that Word is enough. Recently I saw a letter from a bank declining to extend a mortgage that was due, but agreeing to lend a sum of five hundred dollars less than the face of the former mortgage. And the reason the bank gave was this: "The property is somewhat run down, the buildings are out of order, both exterior and interior, and things about the grounds have a general run-down appearance." There was no lack of faith in the owner, no question of his business integrity, no doubt of his financial standing; for in the same letter there was the statement that, if the owner had other loans to offer, the bank would be pleased to consider them. But the run-down condition, the thorny-ground condition, the neglect, impressed the bank unfavorably. The neglect of the mind depreciates its value. Neglect of spiritual culture depreciates its worth. The unconscious degeneracy that results from failure to study God's Word inevitably reveals itself.

"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you." If the owner of the property had kept the property in good order, the bank would gladly

have made the loan. Let us remember this: Neglect our talents, and God will take our God-given talents from us. Misuse our vision power, and God will take it away. Ignore the things that we have learned, and God will teach nothing more. I say that God will do these things and I refer to no arbitrary punishment or judgment. I simply speak of the presence and play of the fixed, irrevocable, universal law of equivalents that rules in the mental realm, as gravitation or any other law rules in the physical realm.

"For he that hath, to him shall be given." Have we an alertness for God, and for the things of God? In the house of God are we listening to God's voice that tells us what to be and to do? A friend of mine was seriously considering whether or not he should support a Japanese student who had come to America to study medicine. He had a conference with the student on Saturday. The next Sabbath he attended services at a church, not of his own denomination, and at quite a distance from his home. Why he went to that church on that particular day he could not say. The minister was preaching on the voice of God in the souls of his people. Without knowing that this man was in his church and knowing absolutely nothing about the problem that the man was considering, the minister said, "My brother, if God is calling you to any service or to any sacrifice, to the making of any gift for his cause, and you are considering it, I beseech you to

obey the voice divine, and to do it at once; for your delay is displeasing to God." The man went home and he said to his wife: "Our problem is solved. God sent me this morning to hear Dr. —— and through him he has told us what to do." The student was sent to college, was well provided for, and is, to-day, in a large practice among his own people. My friend talks with deep satisfaction about his Japanese student, and of the return that has come to him from his investment. "Take heed therefore how ye hear." "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you."

In our daily living have we an earnest desire to miss no accent of the Holy Spirit? If we are sensitive to the presence of God, and if we are listening to the voice of the Eternal, we shall see how every common bush is aflame with God, and we shall hear the song of the stars, "the hand that made us is divine." As I was leaving a New York hotel, I met a friend, whose winter home is in that hotel. "What are you doing here at this hour?" I asked, and he replied, "I was looking at yonder heavens, amazed at their majesty and marvelous beauty, and wondering about the glory that shall be in the new heavens." The eye sees what it has the capacity to see. Sight is a faculty. Seeing is a capacity and a capacity that grows by culture. It is equally true of hearing.

"God is not dumb that he should speak no more,
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness,
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor."

"From him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." It is not hypocrisy that is meant, but self-deception, unconscious self-deception. "Seemeth to have." I come to church with a hard-trodden mind and spirit, a mind and spirit that I have left open all the week to every intruder; I come to church with a preoccupied mind that I have permitted to become crowded with half-baked theories, or with the enthusiasms and absorptions of the week-day pleasures, or with the scenes and excitements of the Saturday-night amusement, or with the superficial, sensational, worldly things that I read in the Sunday paper; I come to church with the shallow mind, because all the week I have not given a single thought of depth to the great verities, and what is the result? Inevitably I will go away from the church feeling that I have not received anything of value. The worship will be without interest, without significance; the music will be mediocre, and the best part of the sermon will be its ending. By and by church-going becomes an irksome convention, and I find some plausible reasons for giving it the go-by. I go about priding myself on my open mind; the church is too narrow, the preacher is too dogmatic, the whole scheme is outdated and moribund. I am of the open mind, whereas the truth is, my mind is open to everything but the best, and for that I have become too hurried, too shallow, too coarse. In a little while I lose the capacity to recognize the spiritualities when they

appear, or to hear the finer voices when they speak. I do not know how or when it left me.

When the best and the brightest that is in us take leave, it never says good-by. It never touches us on the brow when we are sleeping — I mean day-sleeping — and tells us that the ship is ready, and that it must go. Samson "wist not that the Lord was departed from him." Under the pressure of worldly things, by the slackening of our grasp on the old truths, by our forgetfulness of God, and by our neglect of his worship, by a thousand minute failures and infinitesimal yieldings, the ideals die away, the mind shrivels, the heart becomes impoverished and atrophied. There has been taken away from me that which I had. Men and women of the one talent or of the ten, take heed of what, and how ye hear! There have been waste and defeat in the past, because we have followed some untrue teaching. Let us take up God's Word, make that Word a part of our daily living; hide that Word in our hearts, that we may not sin against God, and God will restore the years that the canker worm hath eaten; he will enable us to turn defeat into victory, to convert waste into worth.

"Let all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'll call them vanity and lies,
And bind thy gospel to my heart."

XVI

CONCERNING COMMONALTY

JESUS, wearied by his journey, sat at a roadside well, and thereby hangs a winsome tale; a tale that is worth the telling, and that will be told as long as people are interested in the Book of God, and as long as preachers shall preach the marvels that are recorded in that Book.

The well at which Jesus sat is of historic interest. It was "Jacob's well," and was "near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." A wealth of indestructible memory gathers round that spot, but the well is not the center of interest in the story. The woman with whom Jesus talked is an interesting character. She was a Samaritan, an alert, intelligent, well-informed woman who freely expressed her views, revealed her prejudices and confessed her sins. Although she challenges attention, she is not the central figure in the story. The truths that Jesus revealed to this woman are among the most sublime and spiritual of all his teaching, and yet these truths do not constitute the only value of the story. These truths may be found elsewhere in Scripture.

The central interest of the story lies in the revela-

tion that it gives of the everyday life, the life of the average people, the commonalty.

This burden-bearing, water-drawing life of ours is not far from the presence of God. This fact the whole life of Jesus reveals. He was very God, and yet his earthly life began in a stable. His infancy was cradled in a manger. His home was a peasant's cottage. His occupation was that of a carpenter. He lived in the commonplace of things. His friends and his disciples were fishermen; the princes of his day knew him not. From first to last Jesus moved amid the common things of life, and yet he lived in the immediate fellowship of God. His life and his teaching affirm that the material or physical surroundings of life in no way condition the presence of God with us.

It is a lesson worthy of emphasis. The divine Presence is vouchsafed to every life. The priests in the temple "where the sacrificial fires burn low and the glimmer of the candles touch the gold of the altar, and the veil hangs close before the Holy Place" are in no better position to receive and to enjoy the presence of God than are the humblest toilers in the midst of their wearying task. Wherever we toil, there also in sympathy is Jesus. Wherever we buy or sell, there also is Jesus interested, as he was in the draught of the fishes. Wherever the hearth fire is, there also is Jesus, leading some Martha to a concern for higher things, and teaching some Mary the importance of the commonplace.

Even at the noontide hour of a working day one may receive such divine revelation as shall change life's whole drift, direction and destiny. The woman of Samaria was looking for the coming of the Messiah, but she expected him to be heralded in some startling, striking way, and to be presented with some array of splendor and glory. She did not expect to find him in the form of a tired traveler, sitting at a well side, and asking for a drink of water.

We must learn to look for God in the humble and ordinary things of common events. We must learn to listen to the voice divine in the cares and duties of the daily routine. This lesson is taught us in many incidents recorded in the Scriptures. Jacob at Luz was not engaged in any sacred observance. He was asleep outside the city gate. But it was there that God drew near and gave him the vision that transformed his life. Moses was tending the sheep of Jethro. The place was a wilderness, desolate and dreary; but it was there that God in the burning bush appeared to him. Two fishermen were mending their nets when Jesus called them, and they became his disciples. Bethel and Horeb and the shore of Tiberias were not more sacred than other places, but God was in those places. Every place is holy; every duty is sacred. At any time and in any place God may reveal himself. The gate of heaven is nearer than we think; at any time it may open, and God may come forth to us.

Of the sons of men none is so depraved that

he cannot receive and respond to spiritual truth. Men are sometimes puzzled over the fact that Christ addressed some of his most spiritual messages to sensual, sinful souls. Some critics, of the rationalistic school, repudiate the record of the conversation of Christ with the woman of Samaria. They hold that the narrative is not authentic. They tell us that it is inconceivable that Christ could address such truths as are found in this narrative to such a person as the woman of Samaria.

These critics have missed the salient point of the narrative. The accent of the story is not to be placed on the woman of Samaria, what she was or what she became; nor is it to be placed upon the great truths that it records. The accent is to be placed upon the fact that the narrative discloses that the most sinful of the children of men have in them the capacity to respond to the most spiritual truths. This the whole ministry of Jesus reveals. When on earth Christ readily found in publican and sinner the missing chord, and touched it into heavenly harmonies. His whole ministry revealed the fact that even the men and women who were guilty of crimson sins had ability to respond to the divine idea and ideal.

We must be delivered from narrow and narrowing prejudices. Between the Jews and the Samaritans there was a bitter feud and feeling. It was national, and that added to its intensity. It was religious, and that added to its bitterness. It was originated

by the fathers. It was sustained by custom. Jesus had to cut his way through all this prejudice in order to talk with this woman at Jacob's well. In all the story of his life there is no more significant disclosure of the broad love of Jesus for humanity than that in this narrative, which tells of Jesus going straight from the Jewish temple into the territory of Samaria to ask a favor from a Samaritan woman and to offer her the best gifts of heaven. It reveals the breadth of Christ; it discloses the intensity of his love; it publishes the all-comprehensiveness of his sympathy; it marks his indifference to all the prejudices that sway and separate men. But the woman was bound by these prejudices. She was surprised that Jesus talked with her, and she asked of him, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." What folly! But prejudice always raises such questions. No matter who Jesus might be, or what he might be, he needed a drink, and in the presence of that need there was no time to discuss the antipathies of blood, of history, of creed. Instead of saying this to the woman Jesus ignored her narrowness, and talked with her until she was convinced that he, at least, was free from all the bigotry and bias of his race, and that her life might feel the broadening touch of his broad life. She saw the beauty of such a life and she was inspired with its ideal.

Prejudice ever blocks the way of attainment and

progress. When Arkwright invented the spinning frame at Preston he had to flee for his life from the infuriated mob which thought his invention would ruin industry. When Stephenson talked about the engine that would run by steam, and move more quickly than the old lumbering stagecoach, storms of ridicule and scorn were hurled upon him. When Galileo discovered that, instead of the sun going round the earth, the earth went round the sun, a prejudiced church flung him into prison. When Roger Bacon, first among the early philosophers of Britain, disclosed certain discoveries that he had made in chemistry and physics, he was accused by prejudice of having fellowship with the Devil, and was cast into prison where he languished for ten years. What is true in the realm of the mechanical arts and sciences is also true in the realm of religion. Prejudice blinds the mind to truth, hardens the heart against sympathy, deadens the soul to spiritual reality. Christ breaks the bands of prejudice. Christianity sets men free, free to think, free to believe, free to do.

The touch of Christ upon any life liberates and transforms it. The woman of Samaria was a sinner, and the disciples marveled that Jesus talked with her. He revealed himself as her Saviour, and she went out of his presence a woman redeemed. She did not come to know Jesus simply as a good man and a wise teacher; as a foe of formalism and hypocrisy: she came to know him as her Saviour,

and she impressed that aspect of his divine character upon her townspeople. The record declares that, after Jesus had tarried two days in their city, "many more believed because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." That is the transforming knowledge. There are multitudes that know Christ much in the same way as the student knows Plato and Socrates; as the military cadet knows Cæsar and Napoleon; as the reformer knows Howard and Wilberforce. They know them as teachers of ethics, as forceful leaders, as lovers of mankind. But Jesus is more than one of a dozen or more of remarkable teachers, of brilliant leaders, of distinguished philanthropists. He is the Saviour of man.

The first transformation wrought by Christ is from vice to virtue: the second is from self to service. The woman came to draw water. She found a Saviour. Then she left her waterpot and hastened to the city to tell her friends and neighbors of her marvelous experience and her new-found joy. She began at once to make Jesus known as the Saviour. She was Christ filled and Christ absorbed, and she could not help telling her friends and her neighbors about him. Everyone that accepts Christ in all fullness does that. Levi, the publican, became Matthew, the apostle. For this he left his money desk. John and Peter, the fishermen, be-

came fishers of men. For this they forsook their nets and their fishing boats. Saul, the Sanhedrist, became Paul, the evangelist. For this he ignored the favor and fame of position. Augustine exchanged teaching of philosophy for the preaching of the gospel. Constantine stopped the building of temples to idols at Baalbec and used the stones that he had quarried in the building of a basilica for the Master.

The inference is not that men, into whose lives Christ comes, are to forsake office and store, counter and desk, shop and factory. But the inference is that, when men are Christ filled and Christ absorbed, new ambitions and new motives are introduced into their life work. "Business becomes a means of fellowship with God. Gain is laid on the altar of divine service. The shop is consecrated and made a holy place." John Doxsee is one of the most successful and prosperous of the fishermen on our eastern coast. But his great business does not absorb his time. He is interested in every good work, especially in personal evangelism. He makes no parade, but follows his spiritual work with the same genius and grasp that he gives to his daily work. Wherever he goes he secures personal workers, enrolls their names under a number, and every year, often more frequently, sends some message to his company of evangelists. He has enrolled at this writing thirteen hundred and ten men and women pledged to personal work.

The Christian is not called upon to lay aside his daily labor to enter into service. But saved men are called upon to become missionaries to their fellow men, to make known the inspiring message of Christ's teaching as Prophet, the broadening power of Christ's life as Man, the saving efficacy of Christ's work as Redeemer, and the controlling influence of Christ's rulership as Lord and King.

The message of Christ concerning the commonalty is this: It is not far away from the presence of God, it may at any moment hear the voice divine; however humble or sinful the life may be, it is able to receive and to respond to the truths of Christ; everywhere and always it may be delivered from all narrowing conditions; it may be transformed into the transcendent beauty of holiness and the unfading glory of a consecrated usefulness.

XVII

CONCERNING THE NEEDS OF MAN

IT was the last, the great day of the feast of tabernacles, one of the three great feasts of the Jews. For seven days the citizens of Jerusalem and the pilgrims to Jerusalem lived in booths. This was to remind them of the forty years during which their fathers had dwelt in tents in the wilderness. During the observance of the feast, day after day, the people had gone from the temple to the Pool of Siloam, following the priests who carried with them the golden vessels of the sanctuary. These vessels were filled with water at the pool and carried back to the temple. On arriving at the outer courts of the temple, the priests poured the water forth from the golden vessels. This act reminded the people that their fathers had not lacked water during the time of their residence in the parched and thirsty desert.

On this last, the great day of the feast, the procession of priests and people moved as before, the priests bearing the golden vessels to the pool, but on this day they carried them back to the temple empty, thus signifying their expectation of the

Coming One who would give them the gift of living water, and thereby satisfy the deep and imperishable need of the soul. As the men thus returned to the temple Jesus stood watching them. Here and there among them he noted some earnest faces marked with a longing that had not been satisfied, some who understood the symbolism of the scene, and who were actually looking for the coming of the day when the living water should be given. To such expectant and anxious ones, Jesus cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

This is one of the great utterances of Christ which sound through the soul like music from the harps of gold. It has in it the ring of infinite love; it expresses a purpose whose breadth could have originated only in the heart of God. In this utterance Christ claims ability to satisfy the needs of life. What does humanity say to this claim? It says that Christ meets the deepest needs and the highest aspirations of the soul. Christ and the truth he declared fit human life exactly. Let us note six of the deeper needs of man.

The need of God. This need is deepest in the soul of man. The soul, with some self-indulgence, or some self-deception, may for a time disguise this need, but it abides and it persists through all generations. All the varied forms of religion, with their institutions and their many sorts of worship, witness to humanity's need of God. It is a need that sooner or later reveals itself in the soul of every man.

When a man comes to his real self he finds in himself the need of God. Dr. David Gregg expresses it this way: "Man's need of God is like the earth's need of the sun. This earth of ours, ready to break forth into its full spring beauty of green leaf, and pink blossom and burning flower — what would it be without the sun? It would be a poor opaque ball without lights, a dried-up cinder, without heat, without color, without any glory of spring. Perpetual night would brood over land and sea, over mountain and vale. Perpetual frost would bind all its waters, making life impossible on its surface. Such a lifeless, cinderlike thing would man be without God."

This deep need of the soul for God Christ perfectly meets. He reveals the fact of God, never distinctly declaring it or arguing in support of it, but always assuming it and always deepening man's consciousness of God. He reveals the nature of God — as Spirit — and the attitude of God — as Father. He reveals the fact of the presence of the Father in nature and in the whole life of man. The fact of the presence of God may not be the fact most evident in personal experience, but that counts nothing against its reality. The air that we breathe is of vital importance, and yet it is the least conspicuous feature of our environment and the thing of which we may be the least conscious. As the air we breathe is about us, so God is about us. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." We dream

sometimes of an age to come when God will be nearer to us than he is now. You may recall the incident related by Richard Watson Gilder. One summer he was camping among the pines with some friends. One night they talked into the late hours, about the future of humanity, the way to know God, and the time to come, when men should see the living Father face to face. As they retired to sleep, Mr. Gilder, with the poet's imagination, conceived the pine branches above their tents to be whispering among themselves about what they had heard these men saying, and Richard Watson Gilder makes the pine branches say to each other:

> Heard'st thou these wanderers dreaming of a time
> When man more near the Eternal One shall climb?
> How like the newborn babe, that cannot tell
> The mother's arm that wraps it warm and well!

Ah, that it is. God is with us, in us, about us.

> "Closer is he than breathing
> Nearer than hands or feet."

The need of fellowship with God. It is not enough for man to know that God is and that he is present in and about his life. Man, in the depths of his soul, wants to have communion with God. "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat." The cause of the sense of distance from God is sin. Before the soul may hold communion with God sin must be taken out of the life. Through his sacrificial service Jesus Christ does away with sin, delivers the soul from the

grip and the bondage of sin, and so makes possible fellowship with God. Christ perfectly meets this need of man.

There is a familiar but beautiful story that illustrates the point I am emphasizing. A missionary in India presented Christ as the Saviour. At once an old man came forward and confessed his faith in Christ. The missionary was surprised at the quick response, and asked the old man for an explanation, and this is what he said: "Years ago I gave myself to the task of searching my life. I found it full of imperfection and sin. My sense of guilt was overwhelming. For days and nights I wept bitter tears. At last in an agony of despair I cast myself upon the ground and cried to the Power who brought me into existence to send some one to save me. I cried for mercy and acknowledged my sin. I left, there and then, everything with that Power. I have pictured to myself the one whom that Power would send. When you preached Christ I recognized him at once. I have been trusting in Jesus Christ for years, but I did not know what to call him." Christ is the perfect answer to man's need of deliverance from sin, and so becomes man's way into fellowship with God. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

The need of repair. I might use a word that would sound more theological or scriptural than this word "repair," but I could not use a word that would express more clearly what I mean. We know that

our lives day by day need repair; need forgiveness for the shameful sin, for the woeful failure, for the culpable shortcoming: and they need not only forgiveness but also restoration. I do not know of any need of the soul greater than that of repair. The sin and failure of yesterday are a mortgage on the soul life of to-day. Until that mortgage is satisfied there can be no spiritual fervor or freedom. If Saul of Tarsus had not learned that Jesus Christ had freed him from his past, he would have spent the whole of his later life in melancholy, spiritual paralysis. When Saul realized that Jesus stood between him and his yesterdays he became a new creature, his life was repaired, and he went forth like a flaming seraph, carrying God's message of redemption through Europe.

This — the repair of the soul — is the need of every life. We crowd our lives with pleasures and possessions, but while the body luxuriates, the soul languishes. Jesus Christ enters the life, and the soul awakens. Latent faculties are aroused, bound instincts are loosed, unseen powers troop from their graves, new forces are born, aspiration takes the place of ambition, holiness is coveted more than success, the life is no longer limited and hindered, the soul lives, and the soul is the man — "a new creature in Christ."

The need of character. Reconciled to God, in passing into his peace, we are called upon to lead a Christian life, and at once we become conscious of

the fact that we have not power to live this life aright. We recognize the value of all that Christ has done for us, but we realize that our needs are not yet supplied, and we cry with the psalmist: "Thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling?"

This is the need of character, That word is so familiar that it is almost hackneyed. I use it because all know just what it means. In the realm of character Jesus Christ offers to men what no one else offers and what every man requires. He shows man what he ought to be. He fills man's soul with a passion to become that. He gives man a sense of sorrow and shame that he is not realizing the highest in his life, and he gives man power to struggle ceaselessly and strive earnestly to achieve, until at last — not short of the evening time and the setting of the sun — the man shall come to the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There are four helps which every man that aspires to the best most needs. First, a sense of the highest; second, a passion for the highest; third, a deep anguish because one does not realize the highest in his own life, and fourth, an indwelling power which enables one to strive to achieve the highest. The last of these is the unique power of Jesus in the realm of character. Other teachers before and since Christ have told men of the highest, and have kindled in them an ambition to realize it: but when they failed to realize it, and their ambition had turned

to anguish over their failure, these same teachers had no word to speak, no power to impart. It is in this hour of deepest, direst need that Jesus steps in. He assures men that he will be in them the power by which they will become like him and perfectly fulfill their lives in him. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The need of service. The true pursuit of life is not culture of self *per se*, but culture of self for the service of others. This is the objective of Jesus in that clarion call on the last day of the feast, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" — satisfaction of need, but it does not end there — for "out of his inner being shall flow rivers of living water" — the satisfaction of the soul in service. And without this service there is no genuine satisfaction of the soul. But mark the connection. First, there is the satisfaction of personal need. While there is thirst in our own lives unsatisfied, no living waters can flow through these lives to others. Thirst has no living water to pass on to other thirsty souls. When our own souls are satisfied in Christ, then there will be a gracious outflow from our lives. We have been helping men and women occasionally, we have been able to give them a little living water, some rivulet has flowed from our life. But when there has been the full inflow of his life so that our every thirst is satisfied, out of our lives rivers shall flow, thirsty souls will be

refreshed, tired hearts will be rested, restless spirits will be calmed.

The one condition of this life of service is the surrender of the will to the freest control of the Holy Spirit. John tells us what Jesus meant: "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." The surrender of the life to the Holy Spirit does not mean the subordination of that Spirit to our aims or objects, but it means that he should use and control us in realizing his purposes. In a magazine article Watts Dunton said that the great writers of fiction might be divided into two classes — those who used their imagination: and those who were used by their imagination, and he said that those who were used by their imagination were men like Homer and Shakspere. It is a subtle and a fine distinction. There are those who seek to use the Spirit of God and there are those who are willing to be used by the Spirit of God. Those who belong to the latter class show the results of a developed Christian experience.

It has been pointed out that in the development of one's life there are four stages. The first is self-consciousness. One becomes aware of himself, as separate from all others, and he says, "I am." If he goes no farther, he is simply an egoist. The second stage is the consciousness of power which enables a man to say, "I can." If he never gets beyond that, he is nothing other than a tyrant.

The third stage is the consciousness of obligation which flows from the realization of power. Duty asserts itself above all that a man is and can do, and compels him to say, "I ought." If the man does not get beyond that he remains in the world as one that wanted to do, and then stopped before the doing. The fourth stage is the consciousness of ability that takes the sense of obligation up into unconquerable resolution and that leads the man to say, "I will."

This process of natural development is paralleled in the spiritual life, but is expressed in two rather than in four stages. These may be termed spiritual assertion and spiritual surrender. The supreme illustration of both is found in the life of Jesus. Hear his self-assertion! "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." More positive and complete self-assertion the world never before nor since has heard. Prior to this he had said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." That is self-surrender, and that is ever the outcome of a perfectly developed spiritual life. The true object of Christian culture is not a growth in character: it is not simply a character at service: the purpose and aim of Christian culture is that we shall become so like Christ that we shall be willing and able to help him in the inbringing of his kingdom, so that being like him and having helped him we shall

be with him forever. This indicates another need.

The need of outlook. Man is set in the midst of a universe crowded with impenetrable mysteries. The profoundest mystery of all, to the thoughtful man, is the man himself, and the issues of his life; what he is, and whither he is tending. The universe gives no answer to his deep questionings concerning these mysteries, and in human reason, unaided by divine revelation, no answer may be found. In the natural and physical sciences we have made great advances, and in our day the study of psychology has become a fashion or a fad. But through these are we any nearer to the knowing of what man is? Or in these philosophies do we find any solution of life's thorny problems? or any balm for the heartache? or any consolation in the hour of sorrow?

When we allow ourselves to think of the future, we are even more confused and confounded by the notions and finespun theories of men. To the questions of the heart concerning the future neither science nor philosophy has any answer. Philip Schaff relates an experience of a friend at the grave of his only child. Dr. Schaff says that he was one of the keenest thinkers of his age, a man that had mastered all the philosophical systems from Plato to Kant. But at that open grave he could find no comfort in philosophy, but only in the words of Christ: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou

hast given me, be with me where I am"; and only in the words of the apostle of Christ: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Supported by these firm assurances, and trusting his child's immortal life with Christ, he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Christ does not answer all our questions about things unseen and future, but he does satisfy our longings in regard to these things. "I say," writes Browning,

> The acknowledgment of God in Christ,
> Accepted by the reason solves for thee
> All questions in the earth and out of it.

Christ satisfies man's needs, therefore man needs Christ and should live in fellowship with him.

> "Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
> More than all in thee I find."

XVIII

CONCERNING TROUBLE

JESUS was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. During his life, sorrows were so multiplied that they became his familiar acquaintances. He knew all that there was to be known of pain and suffering and heartache. That accounts for his deep sympathy with all who are in sorrow, and who have trouble, and it accounts, also, for his penetrating and comprehensive utterances on the subject of trouble.

The most significant of all these utterances is recorded in the fourteenth chapter of John. In these familiar and much loved words Jesus recognized the fact of trouble. That is worth much! There is a modern cult that denies the facts of suffering and of sorrow; ridicules any recognition of trouble, and teaches that trouble is only a fiction of the mind, a mental error. Such ideas do not accord with the life and teaching of Jesus. He recognizes the fact of trouble; a deep, hard reality of human experience.

There is a chord in every heart that vibrates in response to the word: "Man that is born of a

woman is of few days, and full of trouble"; "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." There is no period nor condition of life free from trouble. It frets the babe. It distresses manhood. It fills old age with grief. Trouble wrinkles every brow and furrows every cheek. It invades the most hallowed relations of life. The mother rocks care and trouble in the cradle with her first-born and they do not desert her till her head rests upon that pillow that never grows warm. There is no position in life free from it. The beggar on the roadside cannot gather his rags about him and say, "I am beyond the reach of trouble." The king on the throne cannot stretch forth his scepter and forbid the approach of trouble. There is no position so high and so exalted as to be above its reach, and there is none so low and ignoble as to be beneath the level to which it will sink. All of us know with how much anxiety and care and sorrow our days and nights are freighted. How frequently do we see our highest expectations dissolve, our best plans fail, our finest hopes droop into disappointments! Trouble is a fact of life.

Jesus did not simply recognize the fact of trouble in human experience, but he also gave a specific for its cure. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Believe! If the sore of life is trouble, the cure of trouble is faith. We are not ready at once to accept that teaching. When our hearts are heavy and our lives almost

broken we are wont to say, "If we only knew why this suffering or loss or failure or disappointment or death was permitted to come upon us, we should be better able to bear it." We think that knowledge, rather than faith, would alleviate distress and heal the wounds of the heart. Not so. The knowledge might only intensify the poignancy of the grief.

Jesus knew the human heart, for he made it. He it was who placed in it all the delicate chords that tremble at the touch of trouble. All the changes in the fourteenth chapter of John, the classic on trouble and its cure, are rung upon the words, "faith," "belief," "trust." If you are battling with great trials, believe. If you are engaged in some mighty conflict, believe. If your heart is rent and torn by life's separations and bereavements, believe. In all your trouble and soul agitation fall back on your faith.

In Christ's utterances in the fourteenth chapter of John are the four great central facts of our Christian faith — God, Christ, immortality, fellowship. "Believe in God." The first important truth for the troubled soul to grip is that of the divine fatherhood. Many of our troubles arise from our anxiety concerning this life, our physical existence and provision for it. The body and its wants, its present and prospective wants; the needs of those that are dependent upon us and our responsibility for providing for those needs; what we shall eat, what we shall drink, wherewithal we shall be clothed — all

these press their problems, and we are troubled. "Believe in God," says Jesus. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Trust him. His love and his care will not fail you. "Believe in God."

The deepest comfort of the human soul is found in belief in God. That helps in trouble. The story is told that at one time Luther became much distressed, and feared that the work of the Reformation would be overthrown. Nothing could comfort him. One day his wife, Catherine, dressed in deepest mourning, came into his presence. Luther was surprised and asked the meaning, and she answered, "Why, I inferred from your distress and trouble that God was dead." Luther caught the rebuke and the lesson and, henceforth, was never distressed with reference to the progress of God's cause. It was Catherine's eccentric way of saying to the man, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God." A similar incident is related of the Christian hero, Havelock. He greatly feared as to the outcome of a campaign he was leading and could not be comforted. One day he told his fears to a brother officer, who listened intently till he was through and then asked, "General, is God dead?" General Havelock confessed his sin, laid the burden of his fears on God, and led his forces to triumph. It was another way of saying to the Christian soldier, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God."

"Believe also in me." The second important

truth for the troubled soul to grip is that of the saviourhood of Jesus. Sin is the fountain of sorrow. A large part of the trouble that distresses the soul is because of sin — its penalty, its defilement, its power. Jesus approaches the troubled soul with "Believe also in me." There is something very gentle in that. He seems to say: "I have given myself for you. Trust me. I have suffered that no harm might come to you. Believe in me." In him is the solution of all sin — trouble. He pays the penalty, he cleanses the stain, he destroys the power of sin. When one really believes in him, rests upon him as a Saviour, trouble on account of sin passes away, and in its place come the joys of the redeemed life.

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free."

"Ye believe in God." That is theism. "Believe also in me." That is Christianity. Theism teaches that God is. That gives assurance, confidence, hope in trouble. Christianity teaches that God is with us and for us. That changes the whole aspect. In Christ God is with us in our trouble, sympathizes with us and helps us. Belief in God is basal and fundamental, but it is not sufficient. Theism does not fully meet our need in trouble. In the midst of his perplexities and troubles, man wants the warm, pulsating faith that links him to the God-man, the Redeemer. God is brought near to us in Jesus Christ. Poor, tired, baffled humanity can come very near to God as he is revealed in the tired Nazarene sitting

on Jacob's well, or in the tearful Nazarene weeping over Jerusalem, or in the dying Nazarene bleeding upon Calvary. We are sure of his sympathy. We know that he can help us. His weary feet have trod the dusty road which we are treading. His tired shoulders have stooped beneath the very burdens which are rounding ours. He has been in the heat of the battle whose brunt our courage must bear. Because he was in all things tried as we are, we can come to him in our trials and find relief and rest. This is his message to the troubled: "Believe also in me."

This is the cure of trouble, faith in God and in Jesus Christ, his Son. The mystery is that men do not turn at once to Jesus and open their hearts to him. In our trouble we try every other remedy before going to him. A young man got the notion that he would like to be independent and make his own way in the world. He left home and pushed out to make his fortune in a strange city. He had not been there long before he fell sick. When all his money had been spent, the hotel keeper told him that he would have to go to the hospital unless he could secure money that week. The young man wrote to a comrade, but received no response. He wrote to a wealthy friend of his deceased father, but no help came. He appealed to one and to another, but without avail. Then, frenzied with grief, he wrote home, saying: "Dear mother, I am sick. Can you come to me?" Ten minutes after the mother received that message she was on her way to the station, that she might

catch the first train that would take her to her boy. In our trouble, do we not often treat Jesus as the boy did his mother? We call upon the friends and forces of earth to help us before we call on him. "Call upon me in the day of trouble," says God, and "I will deliver thee." "Let not your heart be troubled: . . . believe also in me."

"In my Father's house are many mansions." Immortality. One class of trouble centers about the fact of death. The disciples were utterly dazed by the thought of their Master's departure from them. Sorrow filled their hearts. Substantially the same condition confronts all men. Humanity is baffled by the fact of death. The departure of loved ones, the inevitable separations, fill the soul with grief and anguish. We think of our own departure — the mystery of it, the loneliness of it. Jesus breaks in upon our thought: "In my Father's house are many mansions." I like the tone of that utterance. I like the note of certainty that is in it. Men talk cautiously about the future, their utterances are little more than half hopes, and when they are more, they are pure speculation. Dante and Milton, and lesser lights, have had much to say about the unseen world, but in all that they have said there is little upon which one may fix with certainty. Jesus speaks positively. He came from the unseen world and so is the infallible Master in the knowledge of the world to come. He knew both worlds — the one beyond the veil and this. On no subject did Jesus speak with more im-

perial dignity, with more compelling assurance, than when he told his disciples of the life beyond. "In my Father's house are many mansions." When Jesus said that "he uttered neither the guess of a sibyl, the hope of a prophet, nor the conclusion of a philosopher; he uttered the testimony of a witness to a life of which he had personal and familiar knowledge." He was not a philosopher searching for truth. He was God revealing truth. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." Of course he would. These disciples believed in a future life, their fondest hopes centered in that belief. If they had been mistaken, Jesus would have told them. He would not let them go on hugging a delusion.

There is another note in this utterance that is most attractive. The note of familiarity. When we think and talk about the future our thoughts are apt to be stilted and our speech unnatural. Jesus links the present and the future. He relates earth and heaven and calls them both his Father's house. This universe is part of his Father's house, this earth is one of the mansions. "The world is yours." There is a bright prospect before the believer and, while rejoicing in that, he has a rich possession to enjoy here and now.

"The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets."

But this world is not all. That is what Jesus said to the troubled disciples. Do not suppose that this world is all. You have had a home here; you will have a home yonder. Death does not mean the dissolution of the soul, the destruction of the personality. Death is simply the passage from the lower to the upper mansion in the same house of the Father. There is no perilous journey, there is no stormy sea to cross. 'Tis but a step and lo! another room, larger and brighter than that we left.

For many of us and, at times, for all of us, life is gray and dim. Disappointments break it. The departure of loved ones saddens it. Advancing age narrows its outlook. The glory of the eternal breaks through the clouds and life is renewed. The joy of heaven chases away the griefs of earth. Darkness is turned into light. The world beyond, too fine to be mapped, becomes part of the geography legible to the soul and in its prospect trouble and sorrow are dissolved.

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain."

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Fellowship. This passage has a distinctively dispensational meaning and value. The words reach out to the end of the present dis-

pensation and refer to the coming of the Lord for his saints. In giving the words a personal application we do no violence to their dispensational value. "Death is to the believer what the *parousia* is to the world, the end of the lower and the beginning of the higher stage. To the individual and the world alike the fixed points in the unfolding of the future are the coming of Christ and the judgment."

"I go to prepare a place for you. . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself." These words assume that death works no change in the soul. They affirm the continuity of life. The troubled disciples indulged hopes that this would be so. There were intimations of it in their scriptures. But now Jesus affirms it. Life is continuous. It goes on without any break. Jesus said to his disciples: "You are troubled because you think that my departure will be as though I were not to be. Not at all. I go back to my Father, and when with him I will not forget you." "I go to prepare a place for you." Then our Lord would not forget them. They would be much in his thought and always in his love. The friendships of the past would be continued in the realms beyond. There is much of comfort in that for all that sorrow. The ones we love but have lost awhile remember us, think of us, love us.

"That where I am, there ye may be also." Companionship with Christ, fellowship in the Father's house. That implies knowledge of one another, intimacy with one another — fellowship. And that is

heaven! With Christ and in full fellowship with Christ's people!

"O sorrowing souls, beneath earth's burden bending,
Lift up your eyes to yonder city fair;
And through your tears let prayers be still ascending
For rest and home and loved ones waiting there."

XIX

CONCERNING HEAVEN

JESUS came from heaven, knew all about it, spoke of it often, and always with authority. Myriads have found comfort in his ever-memorable words: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Words simpler than these cannot be found in human language. There is in the sentence not a word that needs definition or explanation. And the thought expressed by the words is equally simple and as easily understood. Yet in them there is a depth of meaning that no human understanding can fathom. Whether we grasp or miss the meaning of the message depends very much upon the mood, the attitude of mind in which we consider the words. If we study them in a speculative mood, if in a merely academic attitude of mind we seek to explore their meaning, they baffle us with the wonderful depth of their revelation. If, however, we meditate upon the words in a spirit of faith and of trust, they comfort

and cheer us with the hope and prospect of the glory that is yet to be.

In the words is a revelation of heaven such as is to be found nowhere else in the teaching of our Lord. This revelation emphasizes seven things about heaven.

Heaven is a definite locality. It is popular to think and to speak of heaven as a condition of life, as a state of being. Some tell us that heaven is a clean and loving heart: but Christ nowhere teaches, nor is the doctrine found in the New Testament, that holiness and heaven are synonymous. The New Testament does teach that holiness is the way of entrance into heaven; but heaven is a definite place prepared for those saved by the blood of Calvary and purified and made holy by the work of the Spirit of God.

The fact that heaven is a place is everywhere enforced in the language of Scripture. The figures employed are those of a country, a kingdom, a city, a house — figures that imply locality. All the imagery used by the Holy Spirit conveys the idea of a place.

Such is the authoritative teaching of Jesus. He tells us that he came down from heaven. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." He came from a definite locality — heaven — to a definite locality — earth — to fulfill a definite purpose — to do the will of his Father. Jesus speaks as definitely about the locality of heaven as of that of the earth itself. He put

the two in contrast: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." He tells his disciples that unto him all power is given in heaven and on earth.

"Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Joy in heaven over the repenting sinner on earth. "In my Father's house are many mansions: . . . I go to prepare a place for you." Such words are utterly without meaning if they do not convey the idea of locality. Heaven is a place. That is the plain and positive teaching of Christ. Whenever he spoke on the subject of heaven he always intimated that it was and is a place. He does not tell us where this fair and holy place is. He assures us that it is, and then, on the very edge of the undiscovered, on the dim borderland of the unseen, leaves us. We peer toward that unseen, unrevealed realm, and vision is lost in infinite space. No way is there of discovering what Christ has not revealed. When Henry D. Thoreau lay dying in Concord, his friend, Parker Pillsbury, sat by his bedside. He took the hand of his dying friend and said to him: "Henry, you are near to the border now. Can you see anything on the other side?" And Thoreau answered, "One world at a time, Parker."

As we look upon the face of the dead, our thought and our love follow the spirit just gone, but the realm into which the spirit has entered is above our ken, beyond our sight, and we have no clue to guide us

in our quest of its new abode. But we rest our hope in the words of Jesus—words gloriously rich in their wondrous suggestiveness. On the authority of Jesus we know that somewhere in the depths of space lies the paradise of our hope, though leading up to its glorious entrance there is no pathway visible to sense. No eye has seen the glorious city, but it exists, for so Jesus has declared. What unspeakable comfort! You know not where your loved one is, but you have the assurance of Christ that he is and that he is somewhere.

"I know not where that city lifts
Its jasper walls in air,
I know not where the glory beams
So marvelously fair.

"I cannot see the waving hands
Upon that farther shore;
I cannot hear the rapturous song
Of dear ones gone before.

"But dimmed and blinded earthly eyes
Washed clear by contrite tears,
Sometimes catch glimpses of the light
From the eternal years."

Jesus tells us that heaven is the abiding place of his Father. "In my Father's house." God is omnipresent. In his vast and trackless universe there is no place where he is not. Localized or limited he cannot be. And yet there is a sense in which it is true that God is in heaven. Jesus taught us to say, "Our Father which art in heaven."

The question as to whether God is in one place more than in another is a question to which there is given no definite answer: hence its discussion would be vague and unsatisfactory, if not perilous. But we are sure of this. Although God is everywhere, the manifestations of God vary in intensity and in glory. In our experiences on earth it is sometimes hard for us to realize God, our vision of him gets clouded, our sense of him becomes indistinct and dull and at times is almost lost — there is so much in this life that tends to hide God from us. But in heaven God will be revealed to us. There we shall find him; there we shall never lose consciousness of him; there we shall be always with him.

The manner in which God's presence will be revealed and perceived by us is not made known. But we may be sure of this: our vision of God will be through Jesus Christ. He is in the Father's house, and he is there as the God-man, the Revealer of God to man, and is the central Presence and Glory of heaven.

Jesus teaches that he is the center of heaven's thought and life. "That where I am, there ye may be also." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." The dying thief heard him say, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." With me! — that is heaven. Christ is the Glory of heaven. In Revelation John speaks of "a Lamb as it had been slain," "in the midst of the throne." The victim of Calvary is in

heaven, is on the throne. His pierced hand holds the scepter. The brow that had worn the thorn crown wears the glory crown.

Heaven is Christ's abiding place, and Christ is heaven's Glory. At the approach of death the thought that thrills the soul with joy is that, after the departure from this life, we shall be with Jesus. "To depart," cried Paul, is "to be with Christ; which is far better." To be "absent from the body," is to be "present with the Lord." It is not gates of pearl nor walls of jasper nor streets of gold, neither thrones nor crowns nor palms nor harps that make heaven.

A child whose mother was very sick was taken to the home of a neighbor until the mother should recover. The mother, instead of recovering, died. Friends concluded not to tell the child that her mother had died until after the funeral. A week afterwards they took the child home. The little one went into the sitting room to find her mother; then she went into the parlor; then to her mother's room; and then from one end of the house to the other; but could not find her. At last she asked, "Where is my mother?" And when they told her that her mother had died, the child asked to be taken back to the neighbor's house. Home had lost its attraction for her since her mother was no longer there. That which makes heaven is being with Christ. We shall be in his presence, "forever with the Lord," and not only that, we shall also behold his glory. We know

not what that will be, but Jesus says it will be the greatest thing in heaven, to see his glory, glory that is not veiled to us, but is open to our vision.

The doctors had operated on the eyes of a boy who was blind. When the bandages were removed, the lad opened his eyes in silent wonder, as if a new world had been disclosed to him. He looked upon his mother, but he did not know that it was she. Finally he heard her familiar voice asking him, "My son, can you see?" He sprang into her arms, exclaiming, "Oh, mother, is this heaven?" That is the best definition. Heaven is seeing eye to eye! Eyes open so that we see Jesus!

Dr. H. M. Wharton tells the story of a man with whom he had ridden on a train in the South. The man was much excited during the whole journey, and whenever a station was announced would hurry to the platform and look about. Finally Dr. Wharton spoke to him and asked him what there was that so interested him at every station, and the man said: "I have been blind all my life. I went to Atlanta for treatment. It was successful and has brought me sight. Every one of these stations is near my home. I have heard their names, but have never seen them. I have friends whom I have never seen, and my wife and my child are waiting for me. I have seen them only with the touch of my fingers, but they are the most beautiful people in the world, I think." Finally the trainman called out a station, and the man once blind sprang down the steps, and Dr. Wharton

says, "When I looked out I could see him; above the roar of the departing train I heard the man shout, as he held his wife in his arms, and his little girl clung to him, 'Glory to God, I can see.'" Like that will it be for us when we behold Him!

To the godly-minded Oliphant, while he lay upon his deathbed, a friend read the words, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The dying man exclaimed: "Perhaps that is so. There is no weeping in heaven; but I know that I shall cry the first time I see my Saviour." The joy of seeing Christ! The first object that shall enchain our eyes on entering the gates of glory will not be the jeweled walls, nor the golden streets, nor the shining ranks of seraphim; not the parents who loved us, nor the friend who was the very soul of our soul: but the believer's eye, passing by all these, and ignoring the ten thousand wonders of the world of light and joy, in its first enrapturing vision, will rest on Jesus, and thenceforth he shall fill our whole being. That is heaven! The presence of Jesus and an unclouded vision of his glory!

Jesus teaches that heaven is an ample place. "In my Father's house are many mansions." We may be familiar with the suggestion first made by the learned Dr. Westcott that this word "mansions," in our English version, was suggested by the rendering of the Latin Vulgate. The word in the Latin for the word translated "mansions" describes resting places, "stations" on a great road, where

travelers found refreshment. Dr. Westcott thinks that this is the meaning of the Greek word here, so that the idea of temporary repose and then progress is the suggestion contained in this revelation of the future. There can be no doubt that the scriptural revelation of the future involves the thought of perpetual development, of enlargement and expansion. But what Christ emphasizes in this description of heaven, as his Father's house of many mansions, is simply that heaven is our great home, in which there is room and variety enough for all the Father's children. For so limiting the meaning of the word there is some warrant in the fact that in the one other place in the New Testament where the word here translated "mansions" occurs, it implies a permanent abiding. The place referred to is in this same fourteenth chapter of John, and at the twenty-third verse: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The word translated "mansions" is the same word that is translated "abode."

Surely it is not the Lord's meaning in this verse that he and the Father would come unto and stay for a little while with them that love him, as travelers might stay at a resting place on their journey to get rest before proceeding farther. Christ's thought, undoubtedly, is that he and the Father will abide forever with those to whom they come. So in the word "mansions" the idea is not that

heaven is a temporary resting place on life's long journey, but that in heaven we enter our eternal home. In that home there are "many mansions," and that means ample room for all of God's children. In his vision John saw a "great multitude, which no man could number." When the Son of God came to earth there was no room for him in the inn; but when the sons of God go to heaven, there will be room for all in the Father's house.

Jesus teaches that heaven is a specially prepared place. "I go to prepare a place for you." There is an individuality about that. It is the clear intimation of Jesus that when the redeemed pass into the other world they do not enter into some vast, indefinite space. They enter into an environment specially prepared for them. There is nothing more characteristic of our life in this world than our individual tastes. A dwelling place that suits and satisfies one may not suit nor satisfy another. It is the play of the individual taste that makes a house a home. This individuality, purified, enriched, separated from every earthly element of selfishness and ambition, we carry with us into the other world. Jesus recognizes this and assures us that we shall find a place prepared for us, an environment suitable and satisfying.

"'What is heaven?' I asked a little child,
'All joy'; and in her innocence she smiled.

"I asked the aged, with her care oppressed,
All suffering o'er, 'Oh, heaven at last is rest.'

"I asked the artist who adored his art —
'Heaven is all beauty,' spoke his raptured heart.

"I asked the poet with his soul of fire,
'Tis glory,' and he struck his lyre.

"I asked the Christian waiting his release,
A halo 'round him. Low he answered, 'Peace.'

"So all may look with hopeful eyes above,
'Tis beauty, glory, joy, rest, peace and love."

Jesus teaches that the personality that we shall have in heaven is the very personality that we have here. "I go to prepare a place for you." "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." The universe is God's house, and that house has many mansions. This world is not the only habitation for the living. We are to live in another world. Death is only the pushing aside of the portière that the living may pass from one mansion to another mansion of the Father's house. Life is continuous. Personality is permanent. Hereafter is only after here. There is no break in life. There is no such thing as a sleep and a future awakening, save for the body of them that have "fallen asleep" in Jesus. There is no shadow land from which, by and by, the spirits will be summoned. Life goes on without a single break. That is the essence of Christ's teaching. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This means that our individuality shall be preserved. The individualizing of lives is God's most wonderful miracle of being.

"Each life is the unique expression of attributes coming forth from himself, and standing apart from all other lives in the inimitable atmosphere of its own personality. How extraordinarily real is the place of an individual life in the world and in our heart; not to be mistaken for, or confused with, any other; but only, always, everywhere, himself, herself!"

This individuality is unimpaired by death. The persistence of personality is one of the radiant truths emphasized by Jesus. "Handle me, and see," says the risen Christ, "that it is I myself." "As the rainbow glows against the sullen clouds, so does this rich hope of the persistence of personal life stand out in contrast with the dark alternatives of annihilation at death, or absorption after death into the impersonal soul of the universe." Death does not touch the personality. This is taught in the transfiguration scene in the meeting of Moses and Elias with Jesus. They were not indefinite spirits, but two definite personalities — Moses and Elias. Their individuality was unimpaired. This truth is implied in the last words that Jesus spoke to his disciples: You think that I am going to disappear, to be as though I were not. Not at all. I go back to my Father, I live, I shall live. I will come again to you and receive you unto myself. You live. You shall live for evermore.

Jesus teaches that heaven is a place of holy fellowship. Fellowship with Christ. "I will . . .

receive you unto myself." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Fellowship with all the saints! I recall a conversation with my father about heaven in which he asked, "Do you think we shall know the Old Testament worthies, and the apostles of our Lord, when we reach heaven?" Ah, well, he knows all about that now; for a few years ago he entered into that glory, into the goodly fellowship of prophets and apostles. I know he entered in, for he knew Jesus as his Saviour, loved him as his Friend, and served him as his loving Lord. He fellowshiped with Christ on earth and into that fellowship he led his family. He knows all about it now, but when he and I talked of it we spoke in hesitant words, and wished and hoped and found some light in the words of Jesus: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." That word of authority settles the matter for me.

One day I shall meet Moses and Abraham and Isaiah. One day I shall hear the music of David's harp, I shall hear him sing the psalms of the redeemed. I shall spend much time with Peter. I shall listen to John as he talks to me while we walk together along the banks of the river of life. I want to meet Luther and Knox and Cranmer. My soul has always been thrilled by the story of the young martyr, Patrick Hamilton. Sometime I shall talk with him in the glory land. I have read

a great deal about Whitefield and Wesley and Spurgeon. I want to meet them. What a meeting it will be, when all that have lived and labored for God in this world, at different periods and in different places, are together and at home! Our fellowship shall be with these saints of God.

We shall have fellowship with our loved ones. Heaven is home, and home means fellowship. We shall meet those whom we love and have lost awhile. There will be no such thing as family lines in heaven. But we shall know each other there. Memory will not be effaced, personality will not be impaired, love will not be impoverished. Heaven is home. An aged man, on his way to martyrdom, was asked how he felt, and he replied, "Never better, for I know that I am almost home." The venerable Bede exclaimed, as the end drew near, "I am almost home." In bidding his weeping family and friends farewell, a dying man said, "Weep not for me, for before morning I shall be at home."

A brave fellow was carried into the hospital at Gettysburg. The surgeon saw that his wound was fatal, and that the man had only a little while to live. The surgeon, learning that he had a wife and a mother living in Philadelphia, asked if there was any message that he would like to send to his mother. "Can't I get better, doctor?" asked the wounded man. "No," was the reply, "the wound is fatal, and you have only a few hours to live." After waiting a little while the doctor repeated the question:

"Is there any message that you would like to send to your mother?" "Yes," came the answer, as the tears rolled down the hero's face. "When I have died, tell my mother that I have gone home." A little later the doctor asked: "Is there any message you would like to send to your wife?" At the mention of that loved one the tears flowed the faster, and there was a little more tremble in the voice as he answered, "Yes; tell her that I have gone home." Waiting until he saw that the end was near, the doctor assured the dying man that he would deliver the message. "But," added he, "is there no other message that you would like to send?" "No," was the reply, "they will understand it all when you tell them that I have gone home."

"They will understand it all when you tell them that I have gone home." There is no word that I would rather speak to those who stand about my deathbed than this: "I am going home."

"When breaks each mortal tie
That holds me from the goal,
This, this can satisfy
The cravings of my soul—
I'm going home."

Heaven is home. In the mansions of our Father's house we shall meet and have fellowship forevermore. More than that I do not ask to know.

About heaven Jesus teaches these seven things: it is a place; it is a place of God's special manifestation; Jesus himself is the center of its thought,

of its life, of its glory; it is a place of many mansions, of ample room for all of God's children; it is a place in which special provision is made for every child of the Father; it is a place in which our life shall have play and progress; it is a place of abiding fellowship.

When we break free from this life of limitation and step out into the life of liberty beyond, we shall know of heaven what now we can neither know nor conceive; but the things that Jesus teaches we may know. "I believe in this teaching of Jesus because I believe in him. He was not a philosopher groping after truth." He was the divine Man declaring what he knew about the other world. When he said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," he was uttering the testimony of a witness to a life of which he had personal and familiar knowledge. Christ has opened heaven to all that believe in him.

One after another of our friends and loved ones are moving out of our midst and passing upward and onward through the open portals into the Holy City. The family is growing smaller here and larger there. We lift up the eye and behold them gathered within the jasper wall, father with mother, brother with brother, sister with sister, friend with friend. It is a precious company yonder! But it is not complete, and will not be, till you and I shall join it. Oh, the joy of one day sweeping through yonder gates! Welcome from the ransomed throng; welcome from the friends long gone; welcome from

the angels of God; welcome from Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord of all, into that city that is sunless, for God is the light thereof, and templeless, for the Lamb is the sanctuary of it.

"O sorrowing souls, beneath earth's burden bending,
Lift up your eyes to yonder city fair;
And through your tears let praise be still ascending
For rest and home and loved ones waiting there."